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**THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAROLINGIAN
KINGDOM OF LOTHARINGIA, 870-925.**

George Alexander Hope

Presented in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Submitted to the University of Glasgow

Faculty of Arts

September 2005

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ABSTRACT

The subject of this thesis is the Carolingian *regnum* of Lotharingia in the years between the Treaty of Meerssen in 870 and its incorporation into the kingdom of Henry I in 925. Traditionally, the history of this half-century in Lotharingia is told in conventional terms. Despite the loss of its king in 869 and subsequent division in 870, the *regnum Lotharii* apparently remained a coherent geo-political structure which, in maintaining a permanent presence in the landscape, provided a focus for contemporary political action, and thus a suitable and straightforward topic of subsequent historical investigation.

This thesis challenges that traditional approach and demonstrates that, for much of the initial period following 870, the *regnum Lotharii* was precisely not such a coherent structure. Arguing that standard methodological approaches are flawed in seeing the survival of terminology as evidence of permanence in the political landscape, this thesis offers a more nuanced explanation, and shows that the terminology survived because it provided an elastic political legacy that could be deployed at opportune moments by either kings, or their challengers, in constructing images of their own power and authority.

Lotharingia was a politically active unit by the early years of the tenth century and this thesis proceeds to show its emergence. It again exposes traditional explanations as unsatisfactory. This thesis offers an alternative explanation by proposing the emergence of a distinct aristocracy in Lotharingia only at the end of the ninth century. In re-examining the narrative and charter evidence, the thesis reveals this new identity as a reaction to a moment of crisis within the ranks of one particular aristocratic community. It was not a residual identity from an earlier period of political independence waiting for reactivation.

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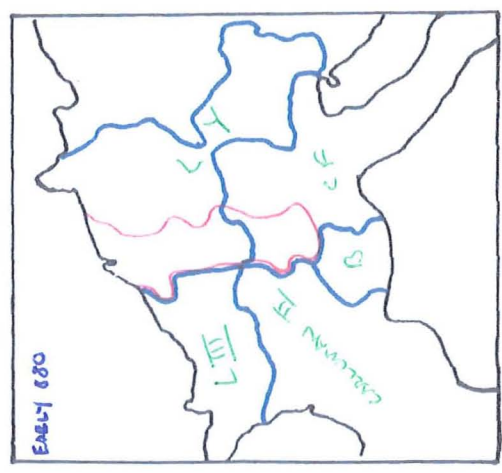
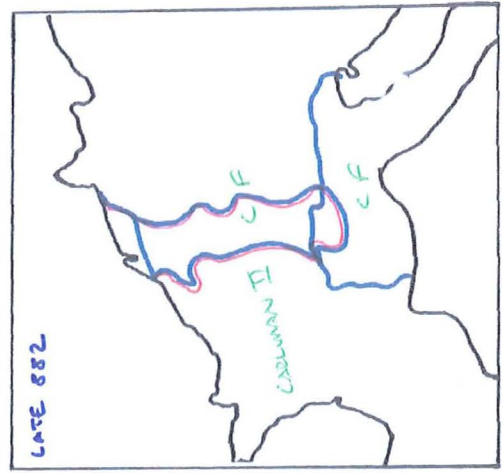
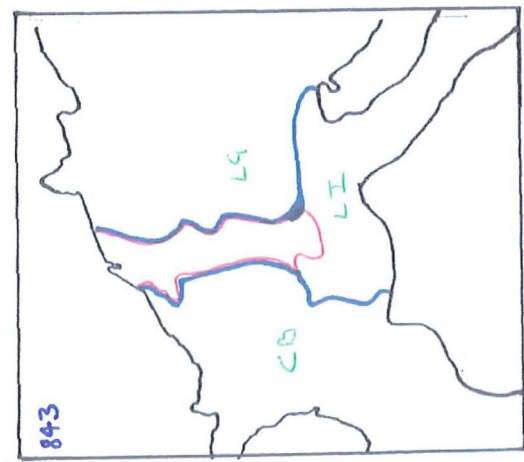
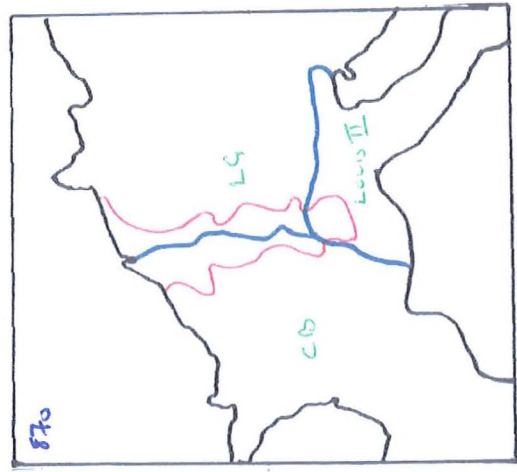
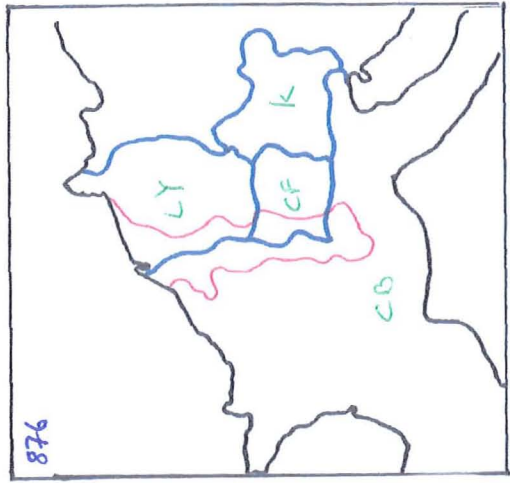
Over the years, my family has never quite understood my fascination of the early middle ages. By no means, however, has their support been lacking and nor now does it go unrecognised.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AHC</i>	<i>Annuarium historiae conciliorum</i>
<i>ALMA</i>	<i>Archivum latinitatis medii aevi</i>
<i>Annales</i>	Flodoard, <i>Annales</i> , ed. P. Lauer, <i>Les Annales de Flodoard</i> (Paris, 1905)
(B)	Bavarian continuation of <i>Annales Fuldenses</i>
BM	J. F. Böhmer and E. Mühlbacher, <i>Regesta Imperii. Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter den Karolingern, 751-918</i> (Innsbruck, 1908)
<i>Cat. abb. Ept.</i>	<i>Catalogi abbatum Epternacensium</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>Diploma</i>
<i>DA</i>	<i>Deutsches Archiv</i>
<i>Echternach</i>	<i>Die Geschichte der Grundherrschaft Echternach</i>
<i>FrMSt</i>	<i>Frühmittelalterliche Studien</i>
<i>EME</i>	<i>Early Medieval Europe</i>
<i>Gorze</i>	<i>Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Gorze</i>
<i>Historia</i>	<i>Historia Remensis ecclesiae</i>
<i>HZ</i>	<i>Historische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>LUB</i>	<i>Urkunden- und Quellenbuch zur Geschichte der althluxemburgischen Territorien</i>
(M)	Mainz continuation of <i>Annales Fuldenses</i>
<i>MGH</i>	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica:</i>
<i>Capit</i>	<i>Capitularia regum Francorum</i>
<i>Epist</i>	<i>Epistolae</i>
<i>SRG</i>	<i>Scriptores rerum Germanicarum</i>
<i>SRL</i>	<i>Scriptores rerum Langobardicarum</i>
<i>SS</i>	<i>Scriptores</i>
<i>MIÖG</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung</i>
<i>Remiremont</i>	<i>Liber Memorialis Romaricensis</i>

<i>RN</i>	<i>Revue de Nord</i>
<i>RVJB</i>	<i>Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter</i>
<i>St-Mihiel</i>	<i>Chronique et chartes de l'abbaye de Saint-Mihiel</i>
<i>Verdun</i>	<i>Die älteren Urkunden des Klosters S. Vanne de Verdun</i>
<i>Stavelot</i>	<i>Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Stavelot-Malmedy</i>
<i>UBMR</i>	<i>Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der, jetzt Preußischen Regierungsbezirke Coblenz und Trier bildenden Territorien</i>
<i>ZSRG GA</i>	<i>Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Germanistische Abteilung</i>

MAP 1

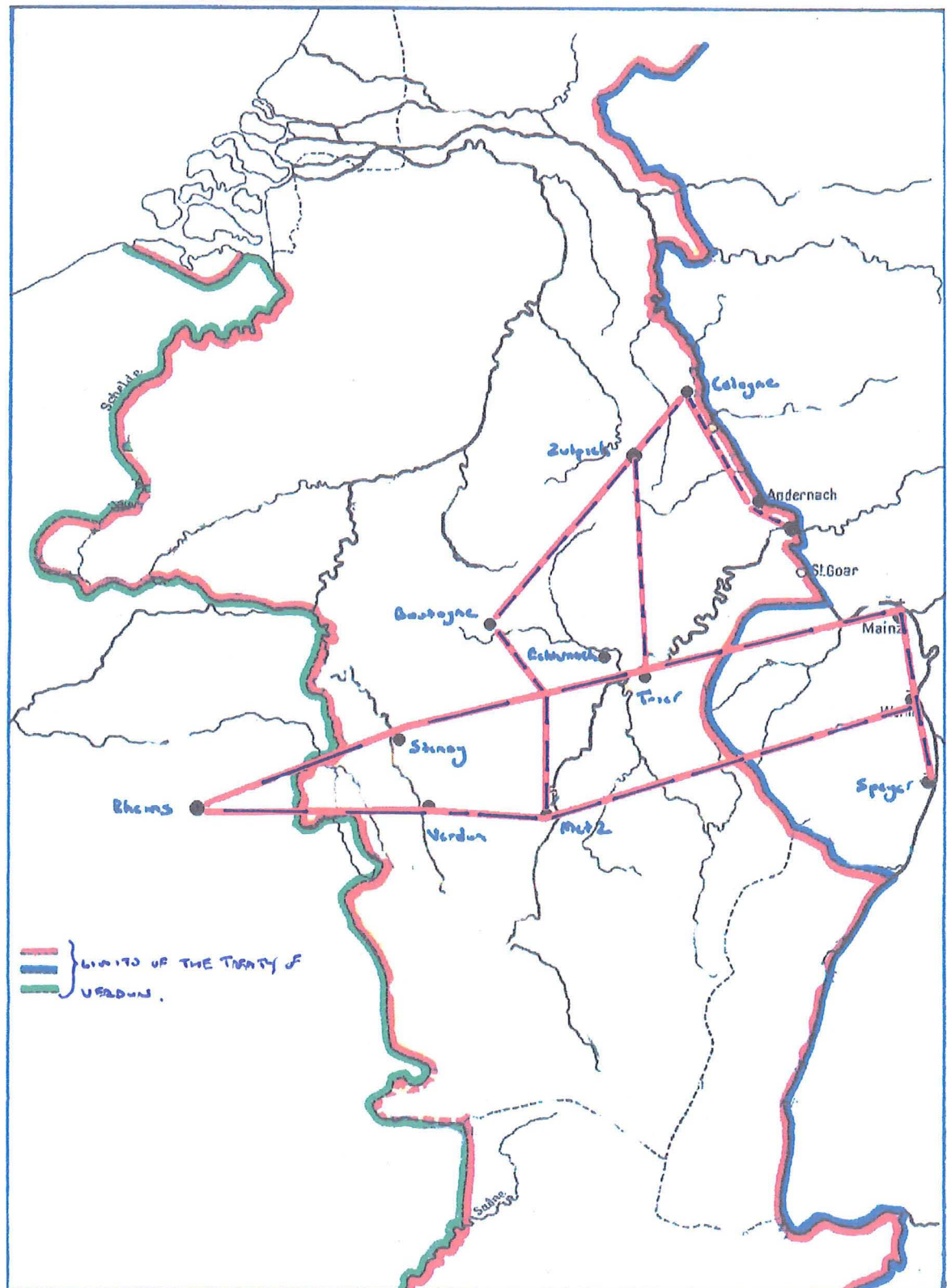


CAROLINGIAN DIVISIONS OF THE REGNUM FRANKORUM
 OUTLINE OF THE KINGDOM OF LOTAR II (855-69)

ACTUAL FRONTIERS OF CAROLINGIAN KINGDOMS IN STATED YEAR.

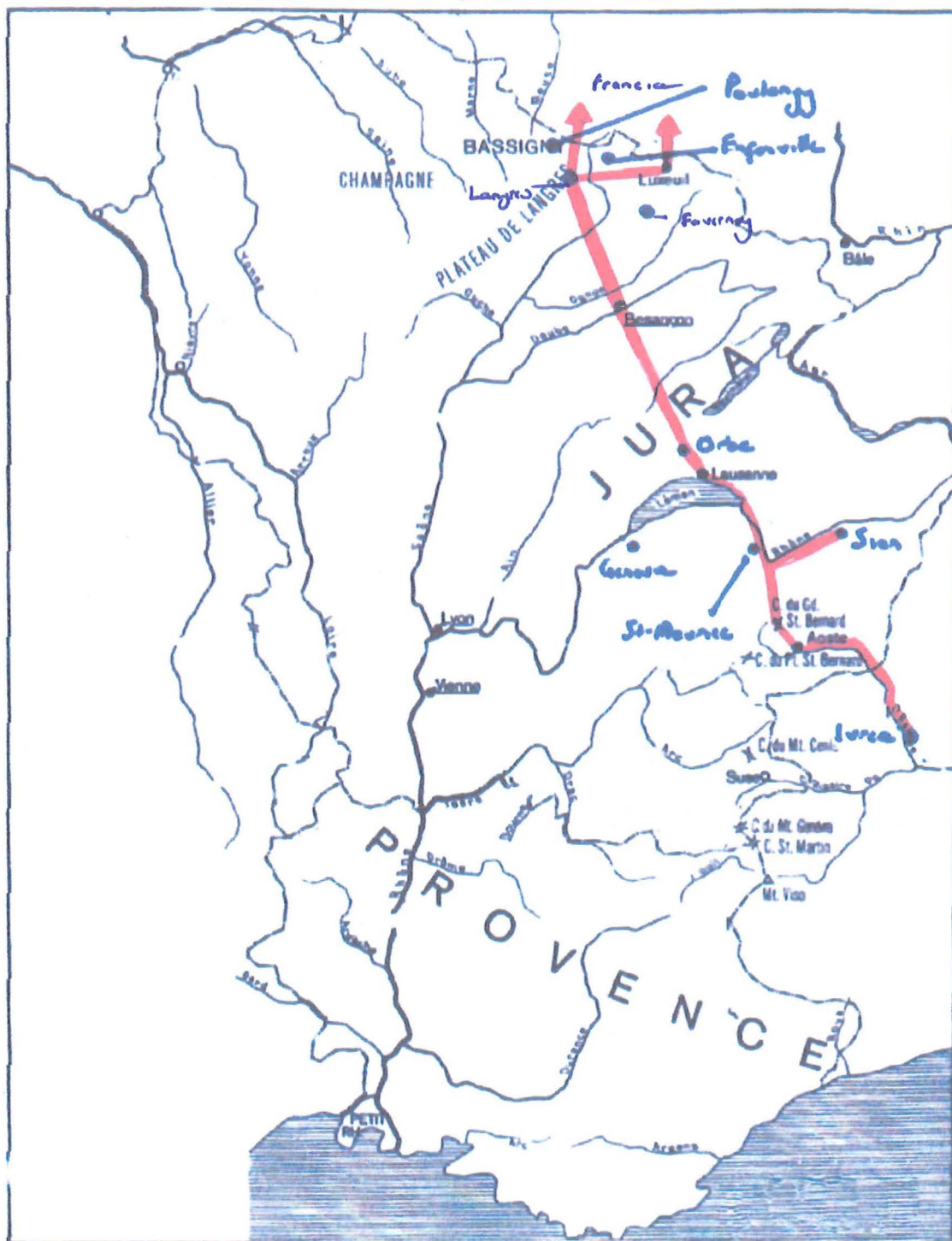
- CB - Charles the Bold
- LG - Louis the German
- LI - Louis I
- CF - Charles the Fat
- LY - Louis the Younger
- LIII - Louis III
- K - Karlmann of Bavaria
- B - Boso

MAP 2: PRINCIPAL ROUTES ACROSS FRANCKIA



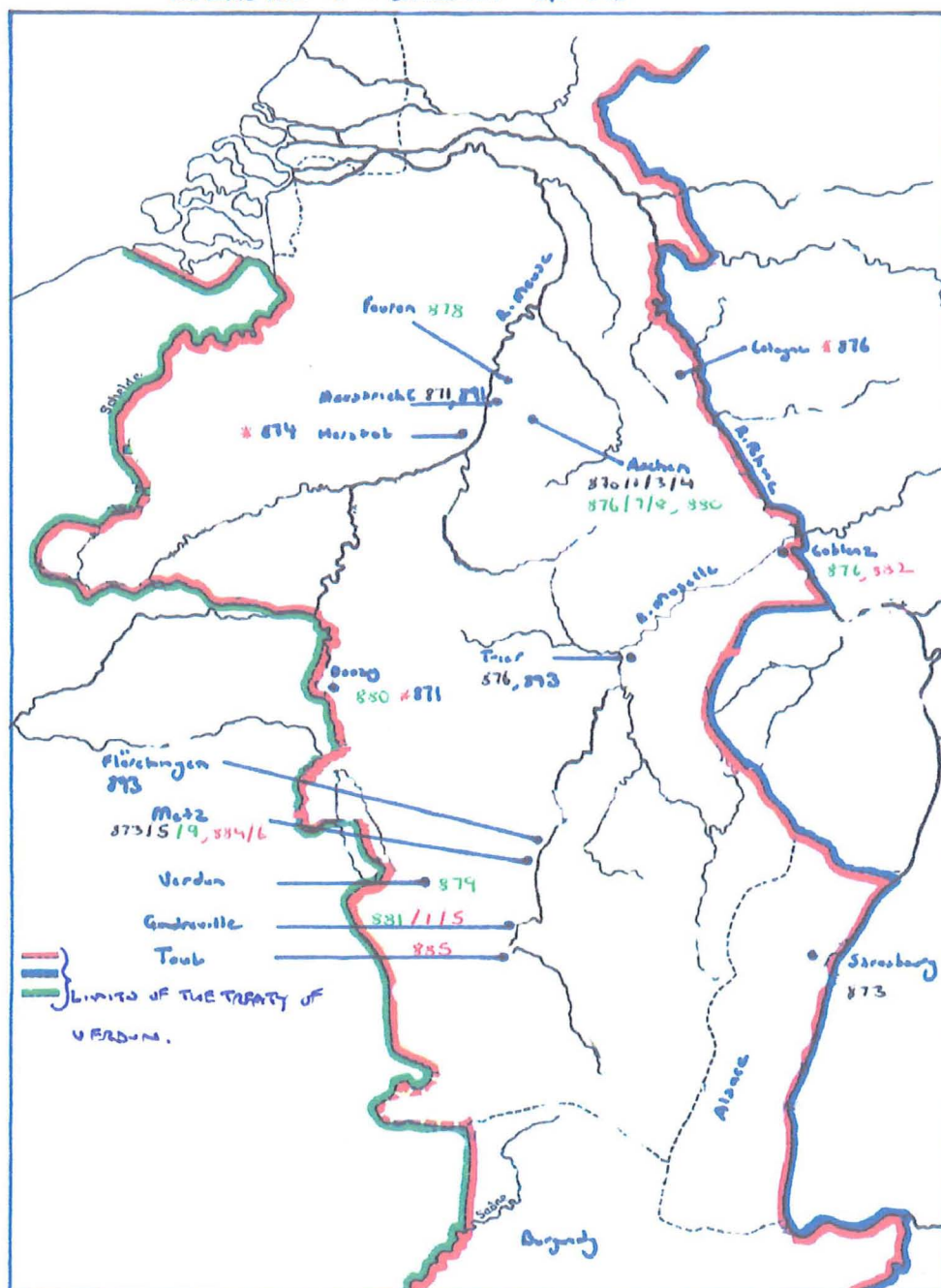
PRINCIPAL ROUTES ACROSS FRANCKIA (ADAPTED FROM F. CARDOT, L'ESPACE ET LE POUVOIR: ÉTUDE SUR L'AUSTRASIE MÉROVINGIENNE (PARIS, 1987), 109).

Map 3
BURUNDY AND ITS PRINCIPAL SITES



PRINCIPAL ROUTE FROM FRANZIA TO ITALY.

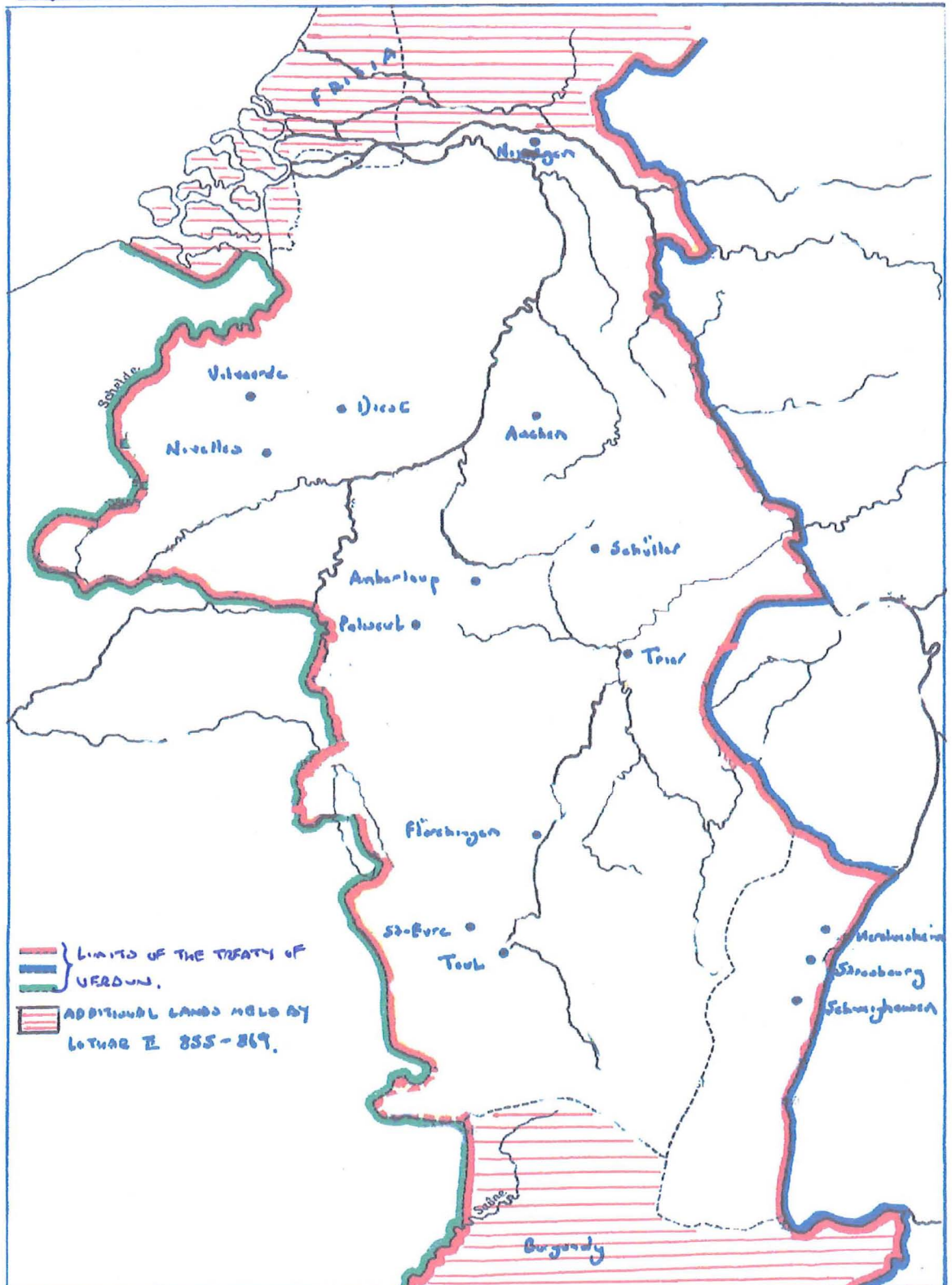
Map 69
THE ROYAL RESERVE IN LOTHARINGA 870-895



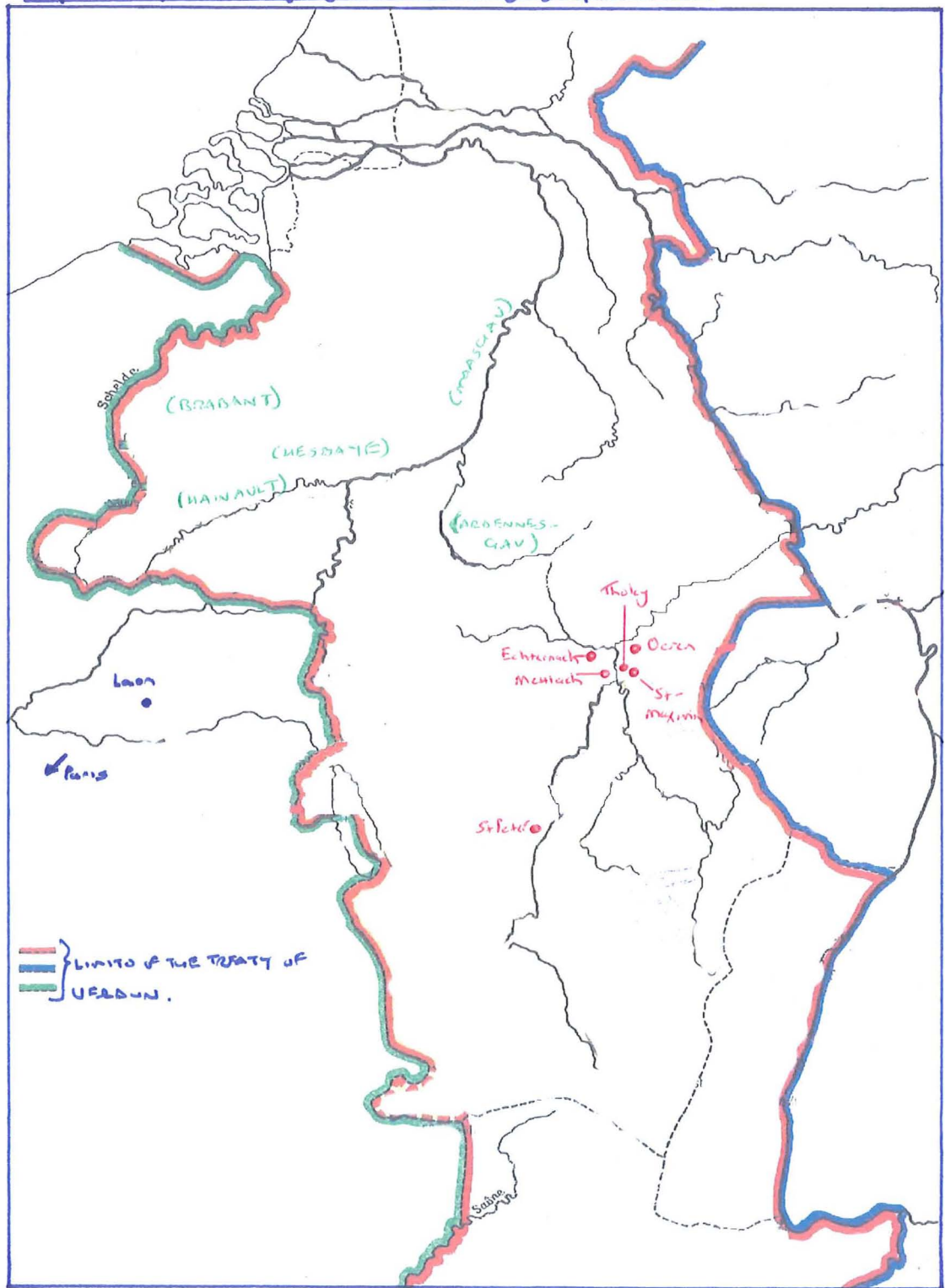
KEY TO NOTES:

- (TEXT) - Louis the German
- (K TEXT) - Charles the Bold
- (TEXT) - Louis the Younger
- (TEXT) - Charles the Fat
- (TEXT) - Arnulf.

Map 5: The territorial differences in the kingdoms of Louis II and Zuenobodo, with the latter's itinerary.

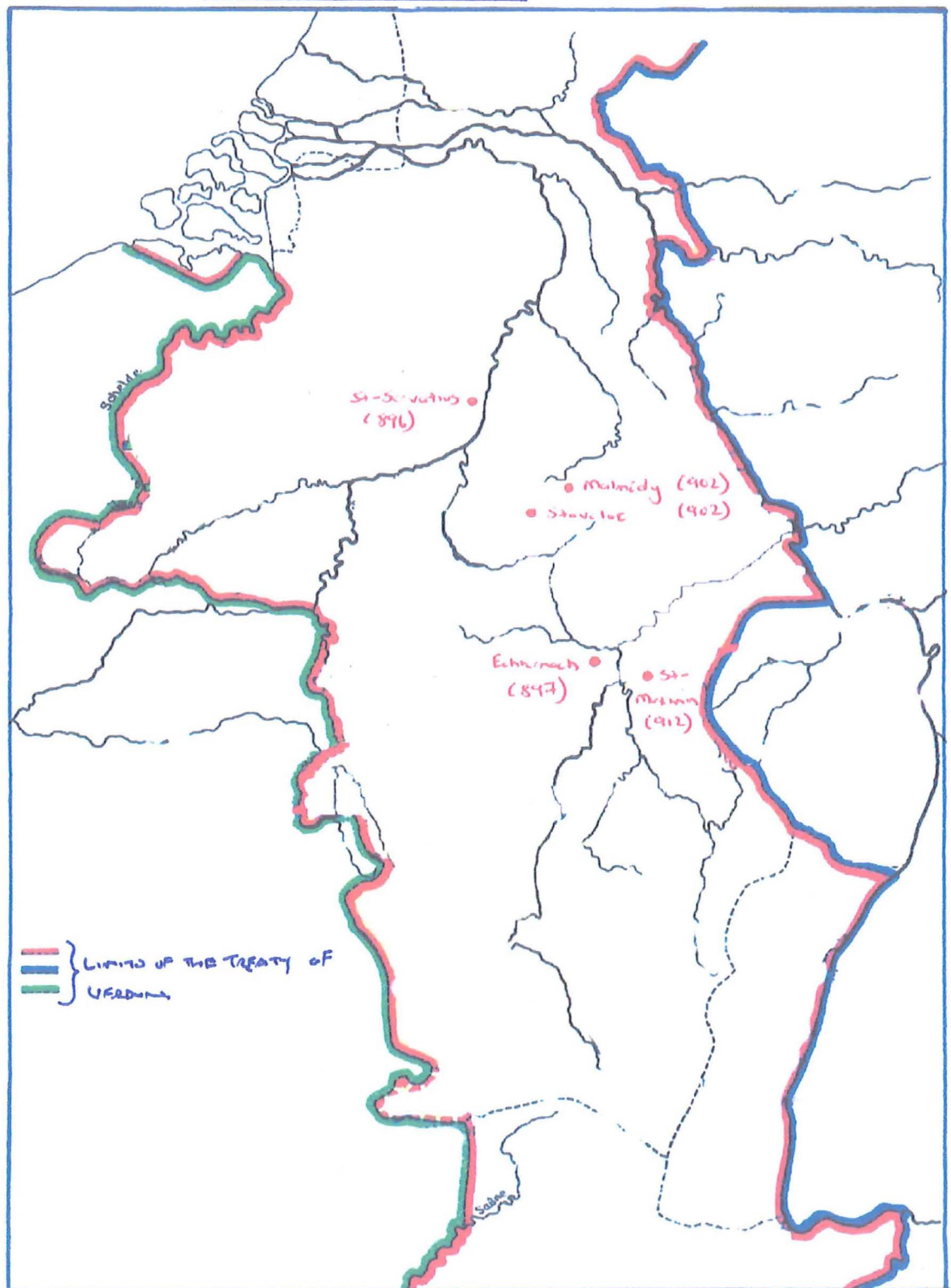


Map 6: Principal locations of Reginald and the Matfridinger group, c. 895



- Known locations of Reginald to 895.
- Likely locations of Reginald's allodial and comital possessions.
- Monastic houses held by the Matfridinger group to 896.

Map 7
REGINALD'S MONASTIC HONOURS



● MONASTIC HONOURS GAINED BY REGINALD IN THE YEARS AFTER 876.
 (NOTE THE ABSENCE OF MATTHEW'S ADDITIONAL HONOURS SEEN IN MAP 6)

Chapter 1

Mise en scène, Themes and Sources.

1.1: Introduction.

On a summer's day in early August 870 two kings met to divide between them the kingdom of a third. The focus of their attention was the kingdom of their nephew Lothar II (855-69) whose death at Piacenza in the previous year had opened up the welcome possibility of new lands and supporters. The two kings who met with one another on that day, at a point exactly halfway between the royal palaces of Herstal and Meerssen near Liège, were brothers, Louis king of the eastern Franks and Charles, the younger of the two men, king of the west and nicknamed 'the Bald' by his contemporaries.¹ There was no feeling of brotherliness in the air that day and the meeting was a rather tense and fraught affair. A wary Louis had insisted that each king's entourage was limited to the quite modest numbers of 4 bishops, 10 counsellors and 30 *ministeriales* and *vassi*; a demand reflecting a distrust of Charles, born of the younger man's earlier attempts to claim the whole of Lotharingia in the previous September when he underwent a coronation as Lothar's successor at Metz. Charles, however, never managed to gain enough support to fully exclude Louis from a share of the vacant kingdom and by early 870 negotiations towards division had begun.²

¹ The most recent treatments of these reigns are provided in W. Hartmann, *Ludwig der Deutsche* (Darmstadt, 2002); id, ed. *Ludwig der Deutsche und seiner Zeit* (Darmstadt, 2004); J. L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London and New York, 1992); J. L. Nelson and M. Gibson, eds. *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom* (Oxford, 1981 and 2nd edition, Aldershot, 1990).

² *Annales Bertiniani*, ed. F. Grat, J. Vielliard and S. Clémencet, *Annales de Saint-Bertin* (Paris, 1964), a. 869, 157 for the episcopal attendance at Metz, cf. *Annales Fuldenses*, ed. F. Kurze, *Annales Fuldenses sive Annales Regni Francorum Orientalis*, MGH SRG, VII (Hanover, 1891, reprinted 1978), a. 869, 69 for the support for Louis the German from within the ranks of the Lotharingian aristocracy.

It was perhaps also at Louis' insistence that the events at Meerssen unfolded in the actual sequence that they did. Charles, after all, had undergone coronation and consecration as Lothar's heir and was accepted as such by the assembled bishops and secular aristocrats who had gathered at Metz in September 869. In the light of their own improved situation, it was now necessary for Louis and his supporters to make clear to those who had offered their support to Charles that the Metz coronation was no longer possessed of any significant constitutive element. The procedure of the Meerssen conference was arranged to make this point. It was probably no coincidence that the two competitors met to divide the *regnum Lotharii* exactly one year to the day following the death of Lothar, on August 8th 870, or that the pronouncement of the new regnal arrangements were made on the next day, August 9th.³ The events at Meerssen were stage-managed to emphasize explicitly the continuity of the new regnal arrangements with the death of Lothar II and thus to relegate the Metz coronation to a position of no political significance.

The nature of the division itself reveals much about the composition of early medieval kingdoms. Archbishop Hincmar of Reims articulated each of the shares awarded to the kings as a collection of *civitates*, *monasteria*, *pagi* and *comitatus*. Louis was the happier of the two with his share for it included the great palace of Aachen and the major episcopal sites of the Moselle valley: Trier, Cologne and Metz. Charles got much less than he had originally hoped and his gain of an extra 50,000km² of territory was focussed mostly in the region between the rivers Sambre and Meuse, although he did manage to gain a foothold near Verdun and in the Bitgau

³ For the details of the treaty, *Capitularia regum Francorum*, ed. A. Boretius and V. Krause, *MGH Capit. II* (Hanover, 1897), nr. 251; *Annales Bertiniani*, a.870, 171-5.

near Trier.⁴ This parcelling out of the components that together formed the *regnum Lotharii* was not necessarily a particularly unwelcome experience for the regional élites of the kingdom. Certainly there were winners and losers in any re-negotiation of regnal boundaries between kings and perhaps this was especially so for families whose fortunes were linked with the extinct royal house. But as the efforts of the Alsatian count Eberhard reveal, possibilities and uncertainties could both accompany the death of a king.⁵

Eberhard was a member of the Etichonids and thus of the family to which Lothar's own mother the Empress Ermingard had belonged.⁶ With ambitious and rapacious kings ready to intervene from both east and west, the king's death had opened up an uncertain time for Eberhard but it was precisely moments like these which, in the meantime, gave men like him a freedom of manoeuvre as they tried to strengthen their positions as best they could. The tenth-century *Vita S. Deicoli* records how Eberhard gained control of the monastery of Lure at the expense of Lothar II's second queen, Waldrada, and of how he then abducted a nun from Erstein, the monastic foundation of Ermingard, in an episode designed, so we can reasonably conclude, as an attempt also to gain control there.⁷ The looming presence on the horizon of Carolingian kings forced Eberhard to act out of desperate

⁴ Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 225.

⁵ The Alsatian focus of Eberhard's activities is provided in the *Vita S. Deicoli*, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH SS*, XV (Hanover, 1887), c. 12, 679 where he is described as, 'comes quidam bellipotens de Alsaciae partibus' but he was clearly active elsewhere in the kingdom, F. Vollmer, 'Die Etichonen: Ein Beitrag zur Frage der Kontinuität früher Adelsfamilien', *Studien und Vorarbeiten zur Geschichte des grossfränkischen und frühdeutschen Adels*, ed. G. Tellenbach (Freiburg, 1957) and S. R. Airlie, 'The Political Behaviour of the Secular Magnates in Francia, 829-879' (Oxford Ph.D. Thesis, 1985), 173-175.

⁶ For royal patronage to this family see, *Die Urkunden Lothars I und Lothars II*, ed. T. Schieffer, *MGH Diplomata Karolinorum III* (Berlin, 1966), [hereafter, *DLothar I* or *DLothar II*], nr. 106.

⁷ *Vita S. Deicoli*, c. 12-13, 677-679 which reports a degree of consanguinity between Eberhard and Waldrada but which is disputed, Vollmer, 'Die Etichonen', 176 and K. Schmid, 'Ein karolingischer Königseintrag im Gedenkbuch von Remiremont', *FrMSt*, ii (1968), 96-134, at 128-29.

uncertainty and his concerns were to protect his own interests in advance of inevitable royal intervention.

Aristocratic concerns turned on the issue of royal accessibility and the maintenance of stable structures of local political action and these, alongside recent memories of the civil war between Charles, Louis and Lothar I in the early 840s, made division of the *regnum Lotharii* the most appealing prospect for its élites. So it was, then, that on August 10th 870 Charles and Louis met on the third and final day of the Meerssen conference. Having agreed to the shares awarded to each, the two brothers wished each other well and departed for their own lands, Louis to Aachen and Charles to the palace of Compiègne.⁸ The kingdom of Lothar II had been divided between them, and as a separate political institution, disappeared from the map of Carolingian Europe.

Yet, when 50 years later the Reims canon Flodoard began keeping yearly accounts of the troubled politics then affecting northern Francia, the *regnum Lotharii* had once again appeared as a separate component of the political landscape, distinct from the kingdom of Charles the Simple in the west, and from the lands to the east ruled by the nascent Saxon royal dynasty.⁹ Geographical features clearly played a decisive part in defining political topographies in Flodoard's *Annales* and it is

⁸ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 870, 175.

⁹ Flodoard, *Annales*, ed. P. Lauer, *Les Annales de Flodoard* (Paris, 1905), [hereafter, *Annales*], a. 919, 1; 921, 5-6; 922, 7; 922, 11; 923, 12, 18; 924, 924; 925, 31. It should be noted that this list could be extended but it has been limited to years till 925 in accordance with the chronology of the thesis. For Flodoard and his works see in addition to Lauer's introduction, M. Sot, *Un historien et son église au Xe siècle: Flodoard de Reims* (Paris, 1993); M. Stratmann, ed. *Historia Remensis Ecclesia*, MGH SS, XXXVI (Hanover, 1998), [hereafter, *Historia*], Einleitung and J. Glenn, *Politics and History in the Tenth Century. The Work and World of Richer of Reims* (Cambridge, 2004), 171-175. An English translation of the *Annales* with a useful introduction is provided by S. Fanning and B. S. Bachrach, eds. *The Annals of Flodoard of Reims, 919-966* (Ontario, 2004).

striking how often he considered the crossing of the Meuse in the west, or the Rhine in the east, as signifying arrival in or departure from the *regnum Lotharii*.¹⁰

More revealing of Flodoard's conception of the *regnum Lotharii* is his identification of a people, the Lotharingians.¹¹ It is not fully clear what characteristics Flodoard thought distinguished the Lotharingians from the Franks of his own kingdom but his record of their infidelity suggests that Flodoard considered them to be an untrustworthy lot.¹² Indeed, distrust of the Lotharingians may partly explain the initial opposition to Charles the Simple from his West-Frankish magnates in 920, an event that led ultimately to the coronation of Count Robert of Paris as king in 922.¹³ Charles the Simple had acquired the *regnum Lotharii* on the death of the young east-Frankish king Louis the Child in 911 and almost immediately expressed his own awareness that the new territories constituted a distinct and special part of his kingdom by inserting into the dating formula of his diplomas the phrase, 'largiore vero hereditate indepta'.¹⁴ Royal success and intervention in Lotharingia, however, was not necessarily welcomed by the established aristocracy of the western

¹⁰ So, e.g. Charles the Simple's retreat across the Meuse from Laon in 922 and his pursuit across the river by Hugh the Great who once there met with, 'the Lotharingian Gislebert', in *Annales*, a. 922, 8; other examples at a. 923, 13, 'Karolus cum suis Lothariensibus inducias, quas nuper a Rotberto acceperant, infringentibus Mosam transiens ad Atiniacum venit'; a. 923, 18, 'Dum haec geruntur, Heinricus...Rhenum transmisisse regnumque Lotharii depraedari nuntiatur'. The river Loire also functioned as a boundary, see a. 924, 24 for the meeting between King Rudolf and William of Aquitaine when the river formed a central part in the meeting's choreography.

¹¹ *Annales*, a. 920, 4; 922, 8-11; 923, 12-13, 17-18; 925, 29, 33.

¹² *Annales*, a. 923, 12-13 for truce agreed between King Robert and the Lotharingians to last until October 1st but which was then broken by the Lotharingians who unexpectedly attacked the royal forces at Soissons, 'illa die proelium non sperantibus, plurimis quoque prandentibus'.

¹³ *Annales*, a. 920, 2; 922, 10.

¹⁴ *Recueil des actes de Charles III le Simple, roi de France (893-923)*, ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1949), [hereafter, *DCharles the Simple*], nr.67; B. Schneidmüller, *Karolingische Tradition und frühes Französisches Königtum. Untersuchungen zur Herrschaftslegitimation der Westfränkisch-Französischen Monarchie im 10. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 1979), 121-138; id, 'Regnum und Ducatus: Identität und Integration in der lothringischen Geschichte des 9. bis 11. Jahrhunderts', *RVJB*, li (1987), 81-114, at 104-5.

kingdom because the acquisition of new territories opened up new, and unpredictable, opportunities of manoeuvre on the part of the king.¹⁵

Favouritism towards the Lotharingians seems to have been the reason for the increasing opposition of the western *optimates* to Charles the Simple and it was upon the king's favourite, Count Hagano, that criticism centred.¹⁶ At no point does Flodoard explicitly refer to Hagano as a Lotharingian but it is clear from the events which unfolded in the course of 920-922 that he was indeed an outsider and that western discontent focused upon the king's disregard of traditional privileges in preference of his favourite. Flodoard explained the initial opposition to Charles the Simple as aristocratic noble response to royal munificence towards a lowborn man, 'pene omnes Franciae comites regem suum, Karolum, apud urbem Suessonicam, quia Haganonem consiliarium suum, quem de mediocribus potentem fecerat, dimittere nolebat, reliquerunt'.¹⁷

Hagano was in fact not a man of humble origins and these accusations reflected the western *optimates* discontent that an outsider had usurped their traditional role of royal consultation and favour.¹⁸ Certainly, Charles raised Hagano high and included him, for example, in prayers for the royal family but this was not

¹⁵ For a similar consequence of royal acquisition of territory at Meerssen see Airle, 'Political Behaviour', chapter 4.

¹⁶ J. M. H. Smith, *Europe after Rome. A New Cultural History, 500-1000* (Oxford, 2005), 179.

¹⁷ *Annales*, a. 920, 2; see also his account in the *Historia*, IV, c. 15, 'pene cuncti Francorum optimates apud urbem Suessonicam a rege suo Karolo desciscentes, propter Hagonem consiliarium suum, quem de mediocribus electum super omnes principes audiebat et honorabat'.

¹⁸ Similarly such accusations had been made earlier in Regino of Prüm's description of the dispute between King Zwentibold and his *optimates* and which revolved around allegations that, 'mulieribus et ignobilioribus regni negotia disponens honestiores et nobiliores quosque deiciebat et honoribus et dignitatibus expoliabat' (Regino, *Chronicon*, ed. F. Kurze, *MGH SRG*, L (Hanover, 1890), a. 900, 148). Accusations of humble origin were made later, however, by Richer, *Historia*, ed. R. Latouche, *Histoire de France* (Paris, 1930), I, 38.

misplaced or inappropriate favour towards a lowborn man.¹⁹ Hagano may have been a relative of Charles' queen, Frederuna, and was associated also with the powerful Lotharingian family of the Matfridinger.²⁰ The spark that ignited the armed resistance against the king was his grant of the monastery of Chelles to his favourite in 922.²¹ The monastery had previously belonged to the king's aunt Rothildis and its award now to Hagano was thus a provocative rejection of claims possessed by Count Hugh, the son of Count Robert of Paris, whose first marriage had been to Rothildis' daughter.²² Hugh went to war in pursuit of his claims.

The nature of Charles' response demonstrates the political distinctiveness of Lotharingia in the early tenth century. In the face of this opposition, the king increasingly retreated across the Meuse to the *regnum Lotharii*, which was used as a base from which to regroup and replenish his military capabilities. In the face of Hugh's initial attack in 922 for example, the king retreated across the river and quickly returned with a squadron of Lotharingians, 'Mosa retransmissa, cum nonnullis qui ad se venerant Lothariensibus'.²³ Indeed, until Charles' capture by Count Heribert of Vermandois in 923, his position in the civil war was essentially built upon support from within a distinctly Lotharingian constituency.²⁴

By the early decades of the tenth century the Lotharingians had emerged

¹⁹ For the prayers, *Recueil des actes de Charles III le Simple, roi de France (893-923)*, ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1940-49), [hereafter *DCharles the Simple*], nrs. 95 and 108.

²⁰ A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple* (Paris, 1899), 107 and n. 1; E. Hlawitschka, *Die Anfänge des Hauses Habsburg-Lothringen: genealogische Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Lothringens und des Reiches im 9. 10. und 11. Jahrhundert* (Saarbrücken, 1969), 77 and n. 25.

²¹ *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 113.

²² *Annales*, a. 922, 8; P. Lauer, *Louis IV d'Outre-Mer* (Paris, 1900), 304; Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 311.

²³ *Annales*, a. 922, 8.

²⁴ *Annales*, a. 922, 8-9, 10; 923, 13.

again onto the map of northern Francia as a distinctly assertive political community. Certainly, divisions remained within the Lotharingian ranks and Charles could not count on the blind loyalty of the *regnum*'s aristocracy. Nevertheless, the Lotharingian aristocracy was by then aware of its political distinctiveness and it sought to negotiate with its rulers, and potential ones, as a politically separate community. Flodoard records, for example, how some Lotharingians responded to Charles' difficulties in the west from 920 by seeking to go it alone under one of their own, Count Gislebert, 'quem plurimi Lotharienses principem, relicto Karolo rege, delegerant', and this separate political tradition was accepted too by kings Robert, Rudolf and Henry I in their own dealings with members of the Lotharingian aristocracy.²⁵

The obvious question to ask, therefore, is how did the leaderless and divided *regnum Lotharii* proceed from its position in 870 to a point in the early tenth century when its aristocracy emerged as an active and politically distinct constituency of the northern-Frankish political map? This thesis examines the nature of such change between the years 870 and 925. The default answer to this question is that Lotharingia had achieved enough of a sense of its own distinctiveness by 870 that it could survive as a distinct and immutable region of the Frankish kingdom well into the final decades of the ninth century and beyond. In other words, it remained a genuine *Francia media*. This is an assumption which has achieved a degree of unchallenged acceptance in the scholarship but which is now increasingly open to reinterpretation.

²⁵ Flodoard, *Annales*, a. 920, 4 and for Robert see, *ibid.*, a. 923, 12. We should note that Rudolf's acknowledgement as king by the Lotharingians took place separately from his initial coronation at Soissons after which he received 'legati..Lothariensium' as the first step towards their

1.2: Themes and Approaches.

The geographical and political centrality of Lotharingia in the late-ninth century political map has long found acceptance in the scholarship. It was from such a perspective that, at the close of the nineteenth century, Robert Parisot proceeded to write *Le Royaume de Lorraine sous les Carolingiens (843-923)* which remains still today an indispensable account of the political vicissitudes of the region in the mid ninth century.²⁶ Parisot's positivist perception of the old kingdom as an unchanging piece of the political landscape which, in the later words of Walter Mohr, possessed a clear *Lebenfähigkeit* with which Carolingian kings had to contend, has essentially continued to hold the historiographical middle ground.

The most pertinent example of this remains Eduard Hlawitschka's 1968 study *Lotharingen und das Reich an der Schwelle zur deutschen Geschichte* which, like Parisot's earlier study, sought to uncover the continuing political dynamism of the *regnum Lotharii* in the late-ninth and early-tenth centuries, and the challenges and opportunities which this inevitably presented to the kings of the period.²⁷ The assumption that Lotharingia remained an unchanging political unit which provided the common thread linking the *regnum* of 869 with that of Zwentibold in 895, and the territories later gained by Charles the Simple in 911 and Henry I in 925, has continued essentially to provide the basic starting point in even more recent investig-

acknowledgement, 'Rudolfus a plurimis Lothariensium susceptus in regno'. For Henry's negotiations with the Lotharingians see, *ibid.*, a. 925, 29-33.

²⁶ R. Parisot, *Le Royaume de Lorraine sous les Carolingiens (843-923)* (Paris, 1899, reprinted 1975); W. Mohr, 'Entwicklung und Bedeutung des lothringischen Namens', *ALMA*, xxvii (1957), 313-336 at 329; id. 'Die Rolle Lothringiens in zerfallenden Karolingereich', *RBPH*, xlvii (1969), 361-398 at 371.

²⁷ E. Hlawitschka, *Lotharingen und das Reich an der Schwelle zur deutschen Geschichte*, *MGH Schriften*, xxi (Stuttgart, 1968).

ations. In the 1995 volume *Lotharingia: Eine europäische Kernlandschaft um das Jahr 1000*, the editors sought to provide a broader thematic approach to Lotharingia rather than one concerned solely with political developments. Contributions to this volume included valuable discussions of the economic, cultural, intellectual and religious vibrancy of the period between the ninth and eleventh centuries.²⁸

Despite these important contributions however, the volume actually offered little in the way of advancing our political understanding of Lotharingia from the position held earlier by Robert Parisot and Eduard Hlawitschka. However, in two important papers Reinhard Schneider and Thomas Zotz forcefully remind us of the vitality and creativity with which early medieval *regna* were formed and reformed, assimilated and dismantled in the Carolingian period while, in a third, Regine Le Jan argued that no sense of political distinctiveness or identity developed amongst the members of the most important aristocratic families of the old *regnum Lotharii* in the late-ninth and early-tenth centuries. These contributions should now warn us against blindly applying a positivist approach which accepts the continuous and apparently objective presence of *regna* in the political landscape.²⁹ The implications of Le Jan's paper are intriguing and essentially form one of the starting points of this thesis. If none of the great aristocrats of the late-ninth century *regnum Lotharii* ever thought of themselves as operating in such a defined political space as the *regnum Lotharii*, should we then continue to organise our own historical reconstructions of that period in precisely such terms? Le Jan herself did not pursue this line of enquiry and

²⁸ H.-W. Hermann and R. Schneider, eds. *Lotharingia: Eine europäische Kernlandschaft um das Jahr 1000. Referate eines Kolloquiums vom 24. bis 26. Mai 1994* (Saarbrücken, 1995).

²⁹ R. Schneider, 'Die Einheit des Frankenreiches und das Teilungsprinzip', in *Lotharingia*, eds. Hartmann and Schneidmüller, 15-30; T. Zotz, 'Das Elsaß – ein Teil des Zwischenreichs?', *ibid*, 49-70; R. Le Jan, 'L'Aristocratie Lotharingienne: Structure interne et conscience politique', *ibid*, 71-88. See

presumably this was because she did not doubt that the *regnum Lotharii* remained a visibly objective piece of the Frankish landscape. It should be pointed out, however, that Le Jan's article shows that historical investigations have become more sophisticated in uncovering the mutability and creativity of early medieval *regna*. Nevertheless, this thesis will argue that, when applied to Lotharingia, the investigation has in effect not yet proceeded far enough, and that we should completely reassess the position of that in the political landscape of the late-ninth and early-tenth centuries.

This approach is influenced by a number of recent advances in historical approaches to early medieval *regna* and political identities and here, in particular, attention should be drawn to a recent article by Roman Deutinger on the place of *Baioaria* and the *Baioarii* in a variety of source material from the ninth to the twelfth centuries. In his illuminating article Deutinger showed that that these terms were not simply employed by some authors to designate, as we might have expected, the core Bavarian lands, but were used rather as descriptors for the entire East Frankish kingdom of Louis the German and his successors.³⁰ One consequence of Deutinger's conclusions is that they force us to accept that different authors meant different things even when they employed the same geo-political terminology as one another. This means, of course, that when the historian turns their attention to the *regnum Lotharii* one is now no longer certain that whatever Archbishop Hincmar of Reims, for example, may have meant when he deployed the phrase in his *Annales* in the west-Frankish kingdom of the 870s and 880s, that it paralleled exactly the meaning

also M. Parisse, 'La Lotharingie: Naissance d'un espace politique', *ibid*, 31-47 and his 'Lotharingia', in *New Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. T. Reuter, vol. III (Cambridge, 2000), 310-327.

³⁰ R. Deutinger, 'Das ostfränkische Reich und das Regnum Baioariorum', *HZ*, cclxxvi (2003), 581-611.

intended by the author of the Bavarian continuation of the Annals of Fulda when that text was written some twenty years. The idea that different things were meant on different occasions by varying authors will form a thread linking each of the chapters that follow.

It is increasingly clear that the older positivist approach to historicising Lotharingia in the mid-to-late-ninth century is now inadequate. Rather, a more credible approach must now account for both the variety in contemporary perceptions of *regna* and the complex processes of reformation which characterised the life of a Carolingian *regnum*.³¹ One well-known example was the use made of the Aquitainian *regnum* to endow junior members of the dynasty with territory of their own.³²

Despite appearances, it is clear that there was no clear continuity between the Aquitainian *regnum* held by Louis the Pious in the years 781-814 with the kingdom awarded to Pippin I in 814 or that to which Charles the Bald later sent his own son Charles in 855. Each *regnum* differed from the next both in territorial extent and the scope of authority which each king was permitted to exercise.³³ These *regna* were created by the demands of the royal family itself. As we have already been discussing, such creativity on the part of Carolingian kings was a consequence of the malleable nature of *regna* themselves, and this flexibility in the art of regnal construction is evident even in Lotharingia in the years prior to the death of Lothar.

³¹ For Carolingian divisions of the *regnum Francorum* and the various uses of territory from the old *regnum Lotharii* see map 1.

³² For Carolingian Aquitaine see, J. Martindale, 'The kingdom of Aquitaine and the dissolution of the Carolingian fisc', *Francia*, xi (1985), 131-91 and her 'Charles the Bald and the government of the kingdom of Aquitaine', in Gibson and Nelson, eds. *Court and Kingdom*, 115-38

³³ Martindale, 'Aquitaine', 115-122.

At its most obvious, this is seen in the king's ability to both add to and detach territory from his kingdom. Seeking to ally with his uncle Louis the German against Charles the Bald in 860, for example, Lothar II handed over, 'partem regni sui, id est Helisaciam', to the eastern king.³⁴ A second alienation occurred in 866 when Lothar yielded the monastery of St-Vaast to Charles the Bald in an attempt to maintain this uncle's favour in the matter of Queen Theutberga.³⁵ The malleability of the middle kingdom, however, also presented problems, as well as opportunities, and Lothar was not able to prevent his uncles from exploiting this basic fact of all early medieval *regna*. In 865, 867 and 868, for example, Louis the German and Charles the Bald met together in Lothar's kingdom to agree on the future division of that *regnum*.³⁶ The meetings of 867 and 868 had taken place at Metz, one of the great centres of Lothar's kingdom, and if it seems remarkable to modern sensibilities attuned to ideas of state sovereignty that a king should have permitted meetings between his competitors to have taken place in his kingdom, this becomes less surprising when we accept that this was the nature of all early medieval *regna*. They were not homogenous units capable of being hermetically sealed. Meetings like those at Metz in 867 and 868 could only have taken place with local support and in the late ninth century other kings still always remained potentially attractive alternative lords. This, alongside the trans-regnal horizons of the aristocracy, served to work against any meaningful consolidation of the middle kingdom.³⁷

³⁴ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 860, 83-4.

³⁵ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 866, 128.

³⁶ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 865, 117; a. 867, 135; *MGH Capit.* II, nr. 244; and for the 868 meeting, *MGH Capit.* II, nr. 255 and for the dating to 868 see, J. Calmette, *La diplomatie carolingienne* (Paris, 1901), 195-200.

³⁷ Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 217.

The certainty that once surrounded the position of the *regnum Lotharii* can no longer be taken for granted. In part this is because historians are now much more aware of the varying nature of Carolingian *regna* and of the subsequent problems of interpretation that they conceal. It is clear that for the kings of our period *regna* were the defining units of political organisation; this is seen in even a cursory glance at the *Promulgationes* and dating formulae applied to Carolingian royal diplomas. The important work of Hans-Werner Goetz has shown that the term *regnum* was used by a number of ninth-century sources to describe a variety of geo-political units ranging, on the one hand, from the great kingdoms of the post-Verdun landscape to, on the other hand, much smaller regions and provinces possessing little by way of a tradition of independent rule.³⁸ Goetz's perspective has since been complemented by Deutinger and both open up the intriguing possibility, as discussed further below, that the term *regnum*, and thus of the phrase *regnum Lotharii* itself, conceal different meanings intended by each of the authors in whose sources we encounter the terminology, and that the nature of one *regnum* in a particular region of the Frankish territories was not necessarily representative of its constituent parts.

This is a thesis that is firmly situated in the tradition of Goetz and others who see the *regnum* as the dominant political structure of the Carolingian period. We should note here that Goetz's contribution unfolded in what was then a much wider debate within German scholarship over the nature of the medieval State and was, in particular, a response to Johannes Fried's influential 1982 article, 'Der karolingische

³⁸ H.-W. Goetz, 'Regnum: Zum politischen Denken der Karolingerzeit', *ZSSRG*, civ (1987), 110-189; also important are K.-F. Werner, 'Völker und Regna', *Beiträge zur Nationsbildung in Deutschland und Frankreich*, eds. C. Brühl and B. Schneidmüller, *HZ Beiheft*, xxiv (1997), 15-43; B. Schneidmüller, 'Völker-Stämme-Herzogtümer? Von der Vielfalt der Ethnogenesen im ostfränkischen Reich', *MIÖG*, cviii (2000), 31-47 at 34-5.

Herrschaftsverband im 9. Jahrhundert zwischen “Kirche” und “Königshaus””, which sought to reduce the *regnum* to nothing more than a complex abstraction with no real purchase upon the workings of contemporary politics in the ninth century.³⁹ This thesis is not intended as another contribution to that debate but it does seek to offer some refinement of interpretation.

Although this thesis implicitly accepts the role of the *regnum* as the primary unit of political action in the Carolingian period, it is nevertheless also influenced by recent work that seeks to remove ideas of institutionalism from the apparatus of Carolingian structures of authority. In particular, it is Matthew Innes’ outstanding *State and Society in the Early Middle Ages: The Middle Rhine Valley, 400-1000* that deserves comment, in which the author argues that political action in the early medieval west was pursued through informal, face to face associations in established local power structures rather than through official hierarchies exercising authority delegated from the centre.⁴⁰ Again, this thesis is not a study of the *regnum Lotharii* in a similar vein to that of Innes, but the implications of his argument run as an intellectual thread through what follows. By rejecting a positivist approach which locates the *regnum Lotharii* as a central political institution in the late ninth century, this thesis builds on foundations recently laid by Innes. Chapter Three will therefore build upon the argument that the *regnum Lotharii* was not an institution of royal lordship in the years after 870 and will argue that this is reflected in the clear failure of such a legacy to mobilise the aristocracy of the region when such appeals were

³⁹ J. Fried, ‘Der karolingische Herrschaftsverband im 9. Jahrhundert zwischen “Kirche” und “Königshaus”’, *HZ*, ccxxxv (1982), 1-43. For useful summaries of the course of this debate see, Goetz, ‘Regnum’, 110-16; Schneidmüller, ‘Völker’, 31-35.

⁴⁰ M. Innes, *State and Society in the Early Middle Ages: The Middle Rhine Valley, 400-1000* (Cambridge, 2000).

made by their would-be rulers. In effect, this chapter contains two case studies and concludes that the failure of the appeals made to the political legacy of Lothar II, that is to traditions of independent rule, made by Hugh, the son of Lothar II, and Rudolf I of Burgundy in 888, reveals the lack of any continuing sense of political distinctiveness of the part of the aristocracy.

As we saw at the beginning of this introduction, however, the ‘Lotharingians’ did emerge as a politically active unit in the frantic politics of tenth-century Francia and this thesis will seek to provide an answer to the question of this emergence. I will argue that because the answer cannot be found in an immutable *regnum Lotharii* existing from the time of Lothar II’s death, an explanation has to be sought in the final years of the ninth century. Over the four main chapters of the thesis I will argue that the terminology *regnum Lotharii*, for all its seeming consistency, actually conceals a complex process of political identity-formation within the ranks of the aristocracy. Chapter Four will argue that the first crucial steps in this process of development occurred in the reign of King Zwentibold (895-900). This was a development, however, which only reached a degree of real maturity in the reign of Louis the Child, and this crucial period is investigated in Chapter Five. In part, this approach has been encouraged by advances in the scholarship; it is based also on an alternative interpretation of the source material.

1.3: The Problem of the Sources.

The positivist perception of Lotharingia as a distinctly coherent and consistent region lying at the heart of the Frankish Empire is built upon deeply sunk

foundations which interpret the subsequent use of the phrase *regnum Lotharii* in the late-ninth century source material as a reflection of the region's continuing political vitality. Although such an approach is evident in Parisot's *opus*, this terminological perspective is mostly associated with work of Walter Mohr who, starting in the 1950s, saw such moments of terminological use in the texts as a reflection of contemporaries' understanding of their own political organisation, and thus as evidence that the old middle kingdom had survived as a coherent and immutable institution despite its extinction as an independent kingdom in 869.⁴¹ We ought to acknowledge, however, that Mohr was not blind to the existence of alternative terminology and he showed that, for all the term *regnum Lotharii* became the established label used to denote the old middle kingdom of Lothar II, other terminology was deployed in the same contemporary source material.⁴² The Annals of Xanten, for example, used both *Ripuariorum* and *regnum Lotharii* to describe the kingdom over which Lothar II had ruled, while the term *Gallia* was similarly employed in the Annals of Fulda.⁴³ Indeed, it is essentially these processes of terminological development which lie at the heart of Mohr's approach to Lotharingia and his work remains particularly useful for its systematic description of this process in the tenth-century source material as *regnum Lotharii* was transformed into *regnum Lotharicum* and *regnum Lothariense*, and its inhabitants from Franks to *Lotharii*.⁴⁴

Other scholars have taken the lead partially mapped out by Mohr and have

⁴¹ Mohr, 'Entwicklung', 328-9; id. 'Die Rolle Lothringens', 371.

⁴² Mohr, 'Entwicklung', 316ff; id. 'Die Rolle Lothringens', 365ff.

⁴³ *Annales Xantenses*, ed. B. de Simson, *Annales Xantenses et Annales Vedastini*, MGH SRG, XII (Hanover, 1909, reprinted 1979), a. 861, 19, 'Lotharius rex Ripuariorum' and a. 870, 28, 'Lotharius rex Ripuariorum'; *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 879, 92-3, 'Quod cum rex comperisset, cum mango exercitu in Galliam perrexit venitque usque Virdunum', and other examples at a. 880, 94-6; 881, 96; 885, 103.

⁴⁴ Mohr, 'Entwicklung', 334ff; id. 'Die Rolle Lothringens', 389.

proceeded to offer a more nuanced perspective of this terminological development. We ought to single out the work in particular of Bernd Schneidmüller as a pertinent example of how Mohr's initial observations have been given a more secure historical context. By placing the example of *regnum Lotharii* alongside contemporary developments at both the eastern and western courts, both of which were coming to increasingly monopolise their own particular terms as labels of political identity, Schneidmüller argues that the transformation of *regnum Lotharii* to *Lotharingia* was an inevitable corollary to this broader development of political identity formation in the coalescing kingdoms to the east and west.⁴⁵ In its way, this terminological approach provides an evidential basis for the much older and still standard approach to historicising Lotharingia in the late ninth century which is to accept the immutability of the region in space and over time. From this basis the historian can then proceed without problem with his or her own investigations.

Such an approach, however, is clearly problematic. As we saw above, the recent work of Goetz and Deutinger has opened up the possibility that when authors of the period used *regnum* in their texts they were not all using it to mean the same thing. The logic of this perspective is that the phrase *regnum Lotharii* did not always mean the same thing amongst those authors who continued to use the term in their accounts of the political scene. Moreover, such differences in meaning may be the product of varying rhetorical, ideological or political agendas on the part of the texts'

⁴⁵ The seminal works remain Schneidmüller, *Karolingische Tradition*, and his *Nomen patriae: Die Entstehung Frankreichs in der politisch-geographischen Terminologie (10-13 Jahrhundert)* (Sigmaringen, 1987). His ideas are explored in English in Schneidmüller, 'Constructing Identities of Medieval France', in *France in the Central Middle Ages, 900-1200*, ed. M. Bull (Oxford, 2002), 15-42. See also the comments made by Werner, 'Völker und Regna', 25.

authors. As with any source, we must account for the presence of these agendas and their impact upon the meaning of the terminology.

Despite the apparently unchanging form of *regnum Lotharii*, differences in actual meaning are best seen in the use of the phrase in the Annals of St-Bertin and in the Annals of Fulda, both of which represent the major contemporary narratives of the mid-to-late-ninth century. These sources, of course, possess their own distinct problems which makes common conclusions from both all the more difficult. Unlike Hincmar's annals, which were the preserve of just one author between 861-882, for the same period of time the Annals of Fulda are a much less coherent text in which multiple authors are present. Initially directed by the Fulda monk Rudolf until his death in 865, the text was continued at Mainz by authors in the circle of Archbishop Liutbert (863-889), who became archchaplain to Louis the German in 870. The manuscripts of this section of the text diverge in 882: a second group was also written at Mainz, and is thus a direct continuation of the earlier Mainz annals, and provides an alternative account of the years 882-7; a third group, meanwhile, provides a further alternative account for the years through to 901 and is produced from a clear Bavarian perspective.⁴⁶ Neither source, moreover, nor their constituent parts, can be described as genuine products of the court. Like Prudentius of Troyes before him, for example, Archbishop Hincmar of Reims could be both critical and supportive of Charles the Bald in his text, depending of course on the state of his relationship with the king at any given moment; similarly in the east, the Mainz

⁴⁶ T. Reuter, *The Annals of Fulda* (Manchester, 1992), 1-14 for the most convenient discussion of the Annals' complex origin and authorship; see also R. Corradini, *Die Wiener Handschrift Cyp 430*: ein Beitrag zur Historiographie in Fulda im frühen 9. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt, 2000); R. McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge, 2003), 33-35; S. MacLean, *Kingship and Politics in the Late Ninth Century: Charles the Fat and the end of the Carolingian Empire* (Cambridge, 2003), 24-27.

sections of the Annals of Fulda ultimately reflected archiepiscopal concerns, not royal ones, while the Bavarian continuation was mostly concerned with the goings-on of Bavarian political life, and turned its attention to the king only at times when the royal presence was in close proximity to that *regnum*. Multiple voices are heard in these texts.

This has an obvious yet significant impact on our use of the source material. The provenance of the multiple authors and the varying relationship of each with the royal court must necessarily warn us against assuming a commonly held interpretation or meaning of the phrase *regnum Lotharii* when it appears in each of these individual texts. As we shall see below, each author could possess their own rhetorical or ideological reasons for deploying the phrase. The likelihood of this forces us to seek out the reasons behind the deployment of the phrase in our evidential base. Thus, while a cursory glance at both the Annals of St-Bertin and the Annals of Fulda could confirm the positivist understanding of Lotharingia - the author of the Mainz continuation described the *regnum* as something which could be held (*tenuit*), divided (*dividit*), returned (*reddidit*), or taken (*subiugavit*), while for Hincmar, too, it could be received (*accepit*), returned, or act even as a destination (*dirigens*) - it is possible with deeper investigation to detect fundamental differences in meaning behind the use of the phrase in the two major narratives.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 876, 86, 'Karolus vero Hludowici morte comperta regnum illius cupiditate ductus invasit et suae ditioni subiugare studuit, existimans se, ut fama vulgabat, non solum partem regni Hlotharii, quam Hludowicus tenuit...'; a. 877, 90f, '...partem regni Hlotharii cum fratribus Carlomanno et Karolo aequa lance dividit'; a. 878, 91, 'Carlomannus partem regni Hlotharii...reddidit...'; a. 880, 94, 'totumque regnum Hlotharii suae ditioni subiugavit'; *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 870, 175, for Charles the Bald's distribution of 'partem ipsius regni quam accepit'; a. 872, 186, for the king's fears that Louis the German was planning, 'partem regni Hlotharii quam contra Karolum accepit...clam reddidit'; a. 875, 198, for Louis the Stammerer's mission to 'partem regni quam post obitum Hlotharii nepotis sui contra fratrem suum accepit dirigens'.

It is clear that, for each of the authors of the Annals of Fulda, there was no intention of endowing the *regnum Lotharii* with any sense of a continuing possession of statehood. Rather, the *regnum* appears in that text only on those occasions of conflict or negotiation within the royal dynasty itself, and only then to act it seems as a veritable land-bank offering the possibilities of territorial division in negotiations between competing Carolingian kings. While the annalist recorded Charles the Bald's declared aim on the death of his brother in 876 to take possession of, at the very least, 'partem regni Hlotharii', and of how, in 880, the terms of the treaty of Ribemont had brought the entirety of the *regnum Lotharii* into the hands of Louis the Younger, such examples actually serve to show that, despite appearances, kings were not necessarily interested in reconstituting the *regnum per se*, but rather only for whatever territorial configurations its acquisition offered.⁴⁸ Louis the Younger, for example, was more than happy to negotiate with his brothers the further immediate division of the eastern half of the *regnum Lotharii*, in the hope that such largesse on his part would yield a valuable share in any future partition of the kingdom of Italy.⁴⁹ With its limited number of appearances in the text, and its passive role on those occasions, the *regnum Lotharii* existed for the author of the Annals of Fulda as a geographical location which possessed no qualities of 'statehood' that had characterised the nature of its existence in the years between 855 and 869.

When deployed by Hincmar however, the role of *regnum Lotharii* is quite different. Although the archbishop of Reims, like the authors of the Annals of Fulda,

⁴⁸ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 876, 86; a. 880, 94.

⁴⁹ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 877, 90f, 'Hludouuicus rex partem regni Hlotharii cum fratribus Carlomanno et Karolo aequa lance dividit'; a. 878, 91, 'Carlomannus partem regni Hlotharii, quam priore anno a fratribus sibi retinendam acceperat, Hludowico redderit'; and Louis's further attempt, *ibid.*, 'missisque nuntiis ad fratrem suum Karolum partem regni Hlotharii, quam a Carlomanno acceperat, cum eo dividit'.

did acknowledge the personal connection of *rex* and *regnum*, he introduced a further altered lexicon which suggests that he possessed a different understanding of the nature of the *regnum Lotharii*.⁵⁰ In writing of the *regnum quondam Hlotharii*, Hincmar separated the person of the king from the abstract concept of the kingdom, and in doing so suggests to us that he perceived the *regnum* to possess a transpersonal quality which continued despite the death of the king. This complex political perspective was certainly encouraged by the events of 869 when papal messengers arrived in Francia and demanded that Charles respect the integrity of the *regnum Lotharii* which they asserted now belonged through *hereditatum ius* to the Emperor Louis II.⁵¹ Similar demands were made again in the following year, ‘*regnum quondam Hlotharii, quod fratri suo imperatorem debebatur, interdicentibus moleste suscepit*’.⁵²

The idea that the *regnum Lotharii* continued to possess an institutional integrity to which one could lay claim to *rule* is complemented by Hincmar’s identification of an apparently distinctive regnal constituency that continued to operate in the years following 870. So, although the Annals of Fulda themselves did not report the event in such terms, Hincmar recorded how Louis the German intended to hold an assembly at Frankfurt in early 873, ‘*cum aliis suis fidelibus, homines quoque qui de regno quondam Hlotharii illi se commendaverunt*’. Similarly, in the aftermath of Charles the Bald’s defeat at the hands of Louis the Younger in October 876, Hincmar’s annals recorded how the king received those ‘*homines de parte regni quondam Hlotharii*’ who had thrown in their lot with the

⁵⁰ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 870, 169, 171, 172, 175; a. 872, 186.

⁵¹ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 167-8.

⁵² *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 168; 870, 177.

west Frankish king.⁵³ For Hincmar then, his record of the competing claims amongst the Carolingians to possession of the kingdom and the continuing existence of a distinct aristocratic community therein, revealed a *regnum Lotharii* which had maintained its permanence in the years after 870.

This brief overview of the uses of *regnum Lotharii* in Hincmar's annals and the Annals of Fulda has suggested that the various authors had differing perceptions of the *regnum Lotharii* in the political landscape of their own day. For Hincmar, the *regnum* retained its political distinctiveness and its aristocratic community remained a political force. For the authors of the Annals of Fulda however, the *regnum* was simply a geographical location that possessed little of the transpersonal quality seen by the archbishop of Reims.

The fullest expression of Hincmar's ideas was provided in his orchestration of Charles' coronation as Lothar's heir at Metz on September 9th 869.⁵⁴ There, in the first of the *adnuntiationes* delivered in the church of St-Stephen, Hincmar had Bishop Adventius of Metz (858-875) mourn the loss of his king Lothar II, 'rege et principe nostro destituti ac desolati', but to then express his desire that God, in whose hands the fate of the now vacant kingdom lay, would establish another king to rule over them, 'deprecantes ipsius misericordia, ut daret nobis regem ac principem secundum cor suum'.⁵⁵ Hincmar then had Adventius exclaim that Charles was

⁵³ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 873, 190; 876, 211.

⁵⁴ Nelson, 'Carolingian Royal Ritual', 115, 118-19; eadem, *Charles the Bald*, 219-20; W. Schlesinger, 'Zur Erhebung Karls des Kahlen zum König von Lothringen 869 in Metz', in G. Dröge, *et al.*, eds. *Landschaft und Geschichte. Festschrift für Franz Petri zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (Bonn, 1970), 454-475, and reprinted in *Königswahl und Thronfolge in Fränkisch-Karolingischer Zeit*, ed. E. Hlawitschka (Darmstadt, 1975), 287-324; U. Penndorf, *Das Problem der "Reichseinheitsidee" nach der Teilung von Verdun (843)* (Munich, 1974), 62-7.

⁵⁵ *Electionis Karoli Capitula in regno Hlotharii factae*, *MGH Capit. II* (Hanover, 1897), no. 276, 337-341, at 338.

indeed the heir to that *regnum*, ‘hunc regni huius heredem esse legitimum, cui nos sponte commisimus, domnum videlicet praesentem regem ac principem nostrum Karolum’. The king was then acknowledged through acclamation by the *populus* and a coronation because, as Hincmar spelled out, ‘reges, quando regna obtinuerunt, singulorum regnorum sibi diademate imposuerunt’.⁵⁶ The coronation of Charles the Bald at Metz, therefore, was designed to give substance to the idea that the *regnum Lotharii* maintained a transpersonal permanence after the death of Lothar II and was done so that Charles could lay claim to it as the only credible candidate. Such lofty claims and sophisticated political thought on his part, however, did not convince everyone. The evident disdain of the Annals of Fulda shows that the messages intended by Hincmar at Metz did travel and that while his claims to unanimity do not hold up to further scrutiny - for only the bishops of Verdun, Toul and Liège attended alongside Adventius of Metz - this does not make any less real the archbishop’s powerful message that the *regnum Lotharii* remained a unit of governance, and that despite the death of its king it could, God willing, fall into the hands of Charles the Bald.⁵⁷ But did the authors of all early medieval sources concern themselves with such lofty political concerns? It is worth comparing the perspectives of Hincmar’s *Annales* and the Annals of Fulda with other contemporary and near-contemporary sources because in doing so a better idea emerges of the position of the *regnum Lotharii* in contemporaries’ mental maps of the Frankish political landscape.

⁵⁶ *Electionis*, 339; for the ordo, *Ordo Coronationis Karoli II. in regno Hlotharii II. factae*, MGH *Capit.* II, no. 302, 456-458.

⁵⁷ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 869, 68-69. Charles the Bald addressed the assembled crowd that they had, ‘certis indiciis ex vestra unanimitate monstraverunt’ (*Electionis*, 339); while Hincmar concluded with a request that they all acclaim the king’s coronation, ‘si vestrae unanimitati placet’ (*ibid.*, 341); the register of participants is provided by the coronation *ordo*.

Not all churchmen were as interested in *regna* or indeed the *regnum Lotharii* as Hincmar. Although Charles the Fat's assumption of imperial rule did not escape the attention of the author of the surviving extracts of the *Gesta episcoporum Viridunensium*, for example, that text displayed little concern with regnal politics.⁵⁸ And while Notker, in his continuation of Erchanbert's *Breviarium Regum Francorum* noted that 'quasi dimidia regni Lotharii' had been added to the kingdom left by Louis the German to his *heredes* in 876, he was evidently unconcerned with the fate of the dynasty of the middle kingdom.⁵⁹ This seems a peculiar absence, especially when placed alongside his provision in the text of other dynastic branches, some of which in the end were themselves not all successful, and suggests that, for Notker at least, the *regnum Lotharii* was an irrelevant enough political concept in his own day that he need not have offered an explanation of its position.⁶⁰ Another perspective is that of the author of the Annals of Xanten, for whom the *regnum Lotharii* was not some new and distinctive geo-political construct but rather the political abstraction of an older Frankish geographical unit, Ripuaria.⁶¹ For other authors, however, the defining characteristic of the nature of the *regnum Lotharii* may not have been its geographical extent at all, but rather the prominence of the great palace of Aachen. Recounting how Lothar II came to meet with his brother the emperor in 869, for example, Andrew of Bergamo tells us how the king marched 'ex sede propria'.⁶² For

⁵⁸ *Gesta episcoporum Viridunensium*, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH SS*, IV (Hanover, 1846), 36-45, at c. 18, 45, 'Post Ludovicum accepit germanus suus Karolus monarchiam totius imperii...Post Karolum accepit Arnulfus nepos illius regnum'.

⁵⁹ Notker, *Erchanberti Breviarium Continuatio*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH SS*, II (Hanover, 1897), 328-30, at 329.

⁶⁰ *Continuatio*, 330, for the descent of Charles the Bald to Louis III and Carloman II, 'qui nunc in primaeva aetate spes adolescent et iam florescunt Europae'; for the admirable descent of Carloman to the illegitimate Arnulf, 'ex nobilissima quidem femina sed non legaliter sibi desponsata conceptum, qui adhuc vivit, et O! utinam vivat, ne extinguatur lucerna magni Ludovici de domo Domini!'; and for the descent of Louis the Younger to his illegitimate, yet bellicose son, Hugh.

⁶¹ *Annales Xantenses*, a. 869, 28 for the identification of Lothar as 'rex Ripuariae' and a. 870, 29, 'Karolus rex Galliae regnum quondam Lotharii cum elatione magna invasit'.

⁶² Andrew of Bergamo, *Historia*, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH SRL* (Hanover, 1878), 220-30.

the author of the *Historia regum Francorum* too, Lothar's kingdom was described in terms of the *sedes imperialis*.⁶³ It is the Annals of St-Vaast that adopts a position closest to that of Hincmar and the Annals of Fulda. In describing the movements of the Vikings in 884, for example, he records that, 'pars illorum mare transiit, atque pars Luvanium in regno quondam Hlotharii, ibique sibi castra statuunt ad hiemandum'.⁶⁴ While in the following year the annalist has the emperor command his men both 'ex regno quondam Hlotharii et regno Karlomanni' to move against the invaders.⁶⁵

As we have already seen with the major narratives, individual political and rhetorical agendas did lie behind the composition of the texts upon which historical investigations depend. Yet, even the attempt to counterbalance the dominant voices of Hincmar or the various contributors to the Annals of Fulda with these relatively minor texts does not escape such problems of interpretation. These sources show that not all authors of the period used the phrase *regnum Lotharii* to mean the same thing; indeed, Notker hardly used the phrase at all, while it is completely absent in both Andrew of Bergamo and Ado of Vienne.⁶⁶ But, we must at least be prepared to accept that these differences in perception could have been driven, as they were in

⁶³ *Historia regum Francorum*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH SS*, II (Hanover, 1829), 324-325, 'Hlotharius vero ex Irmingarda, filia Hugonis, tres filios habuit, id est Hludowicum, cui regnum Romanorum et Italiam tradidit, alterum autem Hlotharium, cui sedem imperatorum reliquit, tertium vero Karolum, cui Provinciam gubernandam dimisit'.

⁶⁴ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 884, 55.

⁶⁵ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 885, 56; a. 879, 45 for the offer made to Louis the Younger of 'partem regni Hlotharii'; and a. 898, 75 for Zwentibold's establishment as king, 'benedici in regem fecit eique concessit regnum quondam Hlotharii'.

⁶⁶ Ado of Vienne, *Chronicon in aetates sex divisum*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH SS*, II (Hanover, 1829), 315-323.

the major narratives, by political or rhetorical agendas which necessarily conditioned the composition of the texts.

In the *Continuatio*, for example, which was written by Notker at the monastery of St-Gall in 881, there is the clear sense that the author's search for suitably commendable Carolingian virtues, a theme to which he would later return in the *Gesta Karoli Magni*, led him to all but ignore the Lotharingian dynasty in that first text, and indeed completely so in the *Gesta*, which was composed in 885.⁶⁷ Moreover, the curious overlap in the dates of these texts' composition with the turbulent final stages in the career of Hugh, the bastard son of Lothar II, may offer a secondary, and clearly political reason, for Notker's apparent failure to acknowledge the *regnum Lotharii* as a constituent part of the political landscape.

It is certainly plausible that a similar explanation lies behind the attitude of both Ado of Vienne in his Chronicle and, by extension, its anonymous continuation, the *Historia regum Francorum*. Both texts eschewed the phrase *regnum Lotharii* in favour simply of *sedes*, and in the case of Ado at least, we can postulate a credible political agenda at work. Such an agenda may seem, at least initially, somewhat surprising. Although in origin from the environs of Sens, Ado had been educated in part at the monastery of Prüm before becoming Archbishop of Vienne in 860. He was therefore one of the great episcopal figures of the middle kingdom. Yet, he had been courted early by Charles the Bald and following Lothar's demise in 869, Ado was quick to acknowledge the western king, and to secure his patronage.⁶⁸ The

⁶⁷ Notker, *Gesta Karoli Magni*, ed. H. F. Haefele, *Notker der Stammler, Taten Kaiser Karls des Großen*, MGH SRG NS (Berlin, 1959); MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 199-229.

⁶⁸ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 329; Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 217.

composition of the Chronicle in c. 870 therefore falls squarely into that period of competition between Charles the Bald and Louis the German over the fate of Lothar's kingdom. If, as indeed seems likely, Ado composed his Chronicle in the first half of that year which, as we shall see in Chapter Two, was precisely the moment at which the western chancery itself discontinued its own initial use of the phrase as a component of royal imagery in the diplomas, then the absence of the phrase in his text can plausibly be linked to contemporary developments at the royal centre.

We need not postulate hidden agendas to appreciate the problems presented by the evidential base to our attempts to accurately position Lotharingia in the late-ninth century political landscape. It is clear that for all its seeming consistency, the phrase *regnum Lotharii* could conceal different meanings for different authors. The simple observation remains, however, that despite this, the history of Lotharingia is reconstructed from predominantly externally produced texts. Most obviously, this is seen in our reliance upon the Annals of St-Bertin and the Annals of Fulda, but this is also apparent with many of the other sources mentioned above. Certainly, Ado's Chronicle was composed at Vienne in 870 but by then the archbishop had committed himself to Charles' cause; Notker's texts were composed at the monastery of St-Gall. Even seemingly Lotharingian texts are not so straightforward. The so-called Annals of Xanten were composed initially at Ghent, subsequently at Cologne, and they provide an independent history of the years 812-873; yet even this suggestion of a Lotharingian connection is misleading. The Annals of Xanten were less *Reichsannalen* of the middle kingdom than a text whose perspective was clearly

directed towards the east-Frankish kingdom.⁶⁹ Similarly, the account provided by the Annals of St-Vaast of the years 873-900 which were, unlike the Xanten annals, composed at the monastery whose name they now bear, are predominantly west-Frankish in their outlook; most probably a result of the monastery's transfer to west-Frankish control in 866. Not so straightforward either is the *Gesta episcoporum Verdunensium*, which was written by a monk of St-Vannes at Verdun in the 920s. Such local texts had their own internal perspectives and for Berthar, the monk who wrote the *Gesta*, it was about recounting the history of the church of Verdun, not providing a history of the *regnum Lotharii*. In other words, the great problem in our attempt to reconstruct Lotharingian history for this period is that it necessarily has to build upon an evidential base which, to all intents and purposes, is produced from outside the region with which we are concerned.

These historiographical concerns of authorial agenda, perspective and context come together even in the one text which seems most likely to stand out as a Lotharingian perspective, the Chronicle completed by Regino of Prüm for Archbishop Adalbero of Augsburg in c.906. The text was written as a universal chronicle over two books and is by far the most informative text for Lotharingian matters in the late-ninth century. However, the source does present the historian with a number of problems. This is a theme to which we shall return in Chapter Four but initial remarks are necessary here.

The late-ninth century history of Lotharingia is revealed to us most fully in

⁶⁹ *Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen im Mittelalter*, eds. W. Wattenbach, W. Levison and H. Löwe, 6 vols (Weimar, 1952-1990), vol 6, *Die Karolinger vom Vertrag von Verdun bis zum Herrschaftsantritt der Herrscher aus dem Sächsischen Hause das ostfränkische Reich*, 882-83.

the Chronicle completed by Regino of Prüm in c.906. In part this is because the Chronicle possesses a distinctly local provenance. Regino was born at Altrip near Speyer, a locality where the monastery of Prüm had long possessed lands and almost certainly on account of which our author was able to enter the monastery at an unknown date in the third quarter of the ninth century.⁷⁰ In 892 Regino was elected abbot of the monastery but held this position only until 899 when, as he relates in his Chronicle, he was ejected by Richar, the brother of the powerful Matfriding counts Gerard and Matfrid.⁷¹ Regino quickly found refuge at Trier, where Archbishop Ratbod provided the monastery of St-Martin as compensation, and it was here in c.906 that he completed his Chronicle.⁷² It seems, therefore, that Regino's life and career unfolded in what looks like a local Lotharingian context. Prüm and Trier had both belonged to the kingdom of Lothar II and it was, in particular, at the monastery of Prüm that the shadow of the Lotharingian kings fell most heavily. The Emperor Lothar I had retired to the monastery in 855 to spend his last days as a monk and was subsequently buried there; while in the reign of Zwentibold, Hugh, the bastard son of Lothar II was imprisoned at the monastery and tonsured at the hands of Regino himself as a continuing precaution by the ruling Carolingians against his claims to the kingdom of his dead father.⁷³ Regino's career at Prüm corresponded with a time in which the monastery housed both living and dead Lotharingians, and in the course of which a new king, Zwentibold, ruled over a territory based explicitly upon the traditions of the old *regnum Lotharii*.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ For Regino and Prüm see, E. Hlawitschka, 'Regino von Prüm', *Rheinische Lebensbilder*, vi (Cologne, 1975), 7-27, at 7-17.

⁷¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 892, 138 – 9.

⁷² W. R. Schleidgen, *Die Überlieferungsgeschichte der Chronik des Regino von Prüm* (Mainz, 1977), 131 for the uncertainty over the *Chronicon*'s place of composition.

⁷³ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 855, 77; a. 885, 125; see below, 86ff for Hugh's career.

⁷⁴ For Zwentibold's career see below, 137ff.

Given this background, a cursory glance at Regino's text would seem to confirm, as it was with the earlier narratives, the positivist perception of Lotharingia. The phrase *regnum Lotharii* was regularly used by Regino in his account of the years after 870 and was used, as it was in the Annals of St-Bertin and Fulda, to describe a geographical location in which cities were located, Vikings resided or provincial armies raised, and a political prize over which Carolingian kings competed.⁷⁵ Yet, as with our look in particular at Hincmar's annals, it is clear that Regino's use and understanding of the phrase *regnum Lotharii* was a more complex one of simply recording the political landscape in his own day. As we shall see, the text of the *Chronicon* too contained evident agendas with conditioned his use, and thus our understanding, of *regnum Lotharii*. It stands as another example of the danger of blindly accepting at face-value an uncritical and common meaning of the phrase in the source material.

Regino's perspective in his text was much broader. He was interested in the fate of the Carolingian royal family and in explaining how the dynasty had come to lose its claims to royal exclusivity with the events of 888.⁷⁶ As Regino outlined in his *Chronicle*, the once numerous royal dynasty had narrowed to just one by the reign of Arnulf, and the author was explicit in laying blame with the dynasty itself, rather than a failure of royal power *per se*.⁷⁷ From this perspective much of what Regino has to say about the failure of the royal dynasty necessarily takes us on a journey throughout the entire *regnum Francorum*, as he sought to show the decline of the

⁷⁵ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 876, 111; a. 877, 112; a. 879, 115; a. 884, 121-122; a. 885, 125; a. 888, 130; a. 891, 136; a. 893, 141; a. 894, 142; a. 895, 143; a. 906, 151.

⁷⁶ For a fuller discussion of this theme see S. R. Airlie, "Sad stories of the death of kings': Narrative Patterns and Structures of Authority in Regino of Prüm's *Chronicle*' (forthcoming).

⁷⁷ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 881, 117.

various branches of the dynasty from royal status. This is a text that has at its heart the fate of the *regnum Francorum*.

The context of the Chronicle's composition would always have meant that the text was more than just local regional history. Regino dedicated the text to Bishop Adalbero of Augsburg, who had stood godfather to Louis the Child in 893, and this may suggest that it was intended for the eyes of the young king himself; at any rate it was from Adalbero that Regino sought a critical eye for his text.⁷⁸ Regino also dedicated his works to other important figures at the eastern court: Archbishop Ratbod of Trier received Regino's treatise on music and Archbishop Hatto of Mainz, a collection of penitential and canonical law texts compiled, so Regino tells us, at the request of the Archbishop of Trier.⁷⁹ It is clear that there existed a network of literary exchange between the great men of the kingdom, and it was into this network that Regino's Chronicle ultimately passed.

W. R. Schleidgen has demonstrated the transmission of manuscripts of the Chronicle to Bavaria and Alemannia, as well as throughout Lotharingia.⁸⁰ From this perspective, and the proximity of Regino to the power-holders of the day, his Chronicle should probably be seen as a product of the court and the political impulses that radiated from it. As will be discussed below, this context influenced Regino's treatment of Lotharingia as much as any residual tradition of Lotharingian remembrance at Prüm.

⁷⁸ Regino, *Chronicon*, prefatio, 1.

⁷⁹ Regino, *Epistola ad Hathonem Archiepiscopum missa*, prefatio, xix.

⁸⁰ Schleidgen, *Überlieferungsgeschichte*, 131–151.

Such an attempt to position Regino's Chronicle in a firmly contemporary political context runs counter to the main interests of the most recent historical commentators of the text. Although Heinz Löwe recognised Regino's contemporary political interests, his own focus was to uncover the literary influences that formed the matrix through which Regino made sense of his own time.⁸¹ He identified, for example, the influence of the Roman historian Justin on Regino's understanding of historical causality and effect, and the influence of Augustine on the role of God as an explanatory factor for the vagaries of political life.⁸² Regino, therefore, was influenced by two traditions: one based on Augustine which saw the effects of divine intervention in human history, and the other on the role of *fortuna* for which he looked to Justin.⁸³ A more recent contribution by Hans-Henning Kortüm has identified the influence in the Chronicle of Boethius's *De consolazione philosophiae* and has somewhat played down the role of *fortuna* as an explanatory factor of historical development to the benefit of individual action, *actio hominum*.⁸⁴ It is however the recent contribution to the debate of Stuart Airlie that provides a more relevant perspective for understanding the purpose of Regino's Chronicle. In uncovering clear narrative patterns and connections within the text, Dr. Airlie has revealed to us Regino's obvious mastery of his material and his use of that material to a particular end; he was seeking to explain just how the Carolingian dynasty has come to lose its claims to royal exclusivity in 888 and how the once numerous royal family now inhabited a world alongside royal Robertines, Rudolfings and Bosonids.

⁸¹ H. Löwe, 'Regino von Prüm und das historische Weltbild der Karolingerzeit', *Von Cassiodor zu Dante: Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Geschichtsschreibung und politischen Ideenwelt des Mittelalters* (Berlin, 1973), 149 – 179.

⁸² Löwe, 'Regino', 163, 176.

⁸³ Löwe, 'Regino', 166 n. 51 for the role of *fortuna* and Regino's obvious textual reliance on Justin for the succession to Charles the Fat in 888.

⁸⁴ H-H. Kortüm, 'Weltgeschichte am Ausgang der Karolingerzeit: Regino von Prüm', *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, eds. A. Scharer and G. Scheibelreiter (Münich, 1994), 499 – 513, esp. 504 – 505 and n. 39 for relevant examples.

Dr. Airle's perspective ultimately means that Regino's Chronicle is something less than the History as understood by Professors Löwe and Kortüm.⁸⁵ Regino's ability to construct his material towards a specific end means that our use of the Chronicle must necessarily account for the messages that Regino intended for his audience. The remainder of this introduction will suggest that Regino's treatment of the *regnum Lotharii* conforms to the overall picture of Carolingian decline that Dr. Airle has revealed to be a crucial and central narrative of the text. Ultimately, the question is one of the usefulness of the Chronicle as a reliable source for late ninth- and early tenth-century Lotharingia.

One excellent example of Regino's explicit structuring of a narrative of Carolingian decline is in his account of the arrest and subsequent blinding of King Bernard of Italy by the Emperor Louis the Pious in 818.⁸⁶ Regino accurately records Bernard's treatment by his uncle in that year but the weight and focus of his entry clearly falls on subsequent events, 'Habuit autem iste Bernardus filium nomine Pippinum, qui tres liberos genuit, Bernardum, Pippinum et Heribertum; qui Heribertus Rodulfum comitem filium Balduini interfecit nostris temporibus et non multum post occisus est a Balduino satellite Balduini fratris Rodulfi, qui Balduinus hucusque in Flandris ducatum tenet'.⁸⁷ This single entry is actually about the fate of one particular branch of the Carolingian family and its descent through the generations from the lofty stage of monarchy to both defeat and death in the murky world of feud in early tenth-century Flanders.

⁸⁵ Airle, 'Narrative Patterns', for his warning that Regino's, 'authorial skill and sense of unity of his themes and of his material ensures that it can be dangerous to look at snippets of his text in isolation'.

⁸⁶ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 818, 73.

⁸⁷ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 818, 73.

The story of Bernard's progeny was indeed one of long decline but the impact of Regino's account, and the significance of the meaning he intended, is revealed by the genealogical connections between the generations that provide the framework in which that narrative of decline can unfold.⁸⁸ Similar is Regino's treatment of Lotharingia. Whereas much of the force of his assessment of the line of Bernard of Italy lay in the brevity of that one entry in the Chronicle, and the clear connections apparent within it, Regino's description of the decline of the kings and kingdom of Lotharingia unfolds throughout the text of the Chronicle itself. The dynasty of the Emperor Lothar I, from whom, so Regino thought, the kingdom took its name, fell from the heights of imperial greatness to that of illegitimacy and monastic imprisonment at Prüm in the fate of Hugh, the son of Lothar II.⁸⁹

For all that Regino was influenced by Justin's resort to *fortuna* as an explanation for the vagaries of human affairs, or indeed by the stress placed on *actio hominum* by Boethius, it was perhaps the impact of divine agency that remained the dominant factor in the unfolding of human history. As an example we can take Regino's story of the political extinction of the dynasty of King Pippin I of Aquitaine. In many respects this story of decline mirrors that offered by Regino in his earlier entry that explained the demise of the dynasty of Bernard of Italy. The occasion of the story was the capture of Pippin II of Aquitaine by the forces of Charles the Bald, which Regino placed under the year 853, and his subsequent

⁸⁸ Airle, 'Narrative Patterns'.

⁸⁹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 842, 75, 'Porro Lotharius, qui et maior natu erat et imperator appellabatur, medius inter utrosque incedens regnum sortitus est, quod hactenus ex eius vocabulo Lotharii nuncupatur'; a. 855, 77, 'equivoco vero, id est Lothario regnum, quod ex suo nomine vocatur, concessit'.

imprisonment, firstly as a monk at the monastery of St. Medard at Soissons, and then at Senlis.⁹⁰

Regino's accusation was that Pippin had forfeited his right to rule over Aquitaine owing to the rapacity of his rule there, 'eo quod pace soluta eadem provintia a suis indigenis devastaretur et multa illic mala impune patratrentur' and this, as we shall see, was a theme that Regino later identified in explaining the failure of Hugh to make good his claims to rule in Lotharingia.⁹¹ Regino's entry, however, continues with a short genealogy of the king in which the descent of Pippin II from Pippin I of Aquitaine, himself the son of Louis the Pious, is spelled out.⁹² In an interesting vignette Regino tells us that the Emperor had initially sought an ecclesiastical career for Pippin I in the household of Bishop Drogo of Metz but that the forceful opposition of Lothar had forced him to concede to Pippin instead the province of Aquitaine, 'Sed paternis votis Lotharius eiusdem pueri frater obuius nequaquam permisit eum adtondi, sed vi abstraxit de manu patris: erat enim isdem puer, ut aiunt, ingentis pulchritudinis. Cui postmodum pater Aquitaniam provinciam tantum concessit'.⁹³

The climax of Regino's story, however, is that God did not permit this arrangement to continue for long. The continual drunkenness and revelry to which the king succumbed, and which drove him ultimately to a disgraceful death, is seen by Regino as providential punishment, 'Sed non ei in prosperum cessit, quod a Dei

⁹⁰ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 853, 76.

⁹¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 853, 76.

⁹² Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 853, 76.

⁹³ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 853, 76 – 77; for Pippin I, R. Collins, 'Pippin I and the Kingdom of Aquitaine', *Charlemagne's Heir. New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious* (Oxford, 1990),

cultura et servitio revocatus est; ebrietatibus enim et comessionibus die noctuque vacans ad extremum mente captus in amaniacam incidit passionem et presentem vitam cum dedecore amisit, successorem relinquens Pippinum filium, de quo paulo superius mentionem fecimus'.⁹⁴ For Regino, such was fate of a king who failed to meet the obligations of the royal office.

Yet, while contemporary criticism of Pippin I certainly focussed on the king's fondness for the hunt, no evidence exists to corroborate the later accusations made by Regino that the king descended into alcoholism and debauchery.⁹⁵ Rather, in his early career at least, Pippin I appears in the sources as an energetic and vigorous king. In 819 he imposed his authority upon the unruly Gascons and in 824 assisted the Emperor against the Bretons.⁹⁶ That Regino chose not to dwell on this makes sense when we read his account as a narrative of decline. In his turn, Pippin II lost his right to rule because of his failure to meet the obligations of his office and his failure was augured in the career of his own father who, imposed through tyrannical force and himself unsuitable for the office of kingship, was promptly judged by God. The role of God and his providential judgement on the suitability of kings was a theme that Regino also saw in the career of Lothar II.

To a great extent Regino's take on the death of Lothar II mirrored the remarks made by Archbishop Hincmar of Reims some forty years earlier that the

363-389 and 365, n. 11 for the suggestion that this Metz tradition was concerned with the education of Pippin II and not his father.

⁹⁴ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 853, 77.

⁹⁵ For Ermold the Black's criticism of the king's passion for the hunt see, *Ermold le Noir: Poème sur Louis le Pieux et épîtres au roi Pépin*, ed. E. Faral (Paris, 1964), 220, ll. 42 – 50.

⁹⁶ *Annales Regni Francorum*, ed. F. Kurze, *MGH SRG* (Hanover, 1895), a. 819, 151 – 152 and a. 824, 165.

death of the king was a *iudicium Dei*.⁹⁷ His death was the conviction of a man who had falsely taken communion from the Pope but whose crime could not escape the gaze of God.⁹⁸ Regino's own words are more evocative than those of Hincmar. He creates a scene at Rome in which the Pope warns Lothar of the fatal consequences for one who continued to profane divine law, 'si autem tua conscientia te accusat et loetali vulnere sauciatum proclamat, aut iterum redire mente disponis in mechiaevolubro, nequaquam sumere presumas, ne forte ad iudicium et condemnationem tibi eveniat, quod fidelibus ad remedium preparavit divina providentia'.⁹⁹ Turning then to the *sequaces* and *fautores* of the king, Pope Hadrian, according to Regino, spelled out to them the conditions of accepting Holy Communion, 'Si domino ac regi tuo Lothario in obiecto adulterii crimine favorem non prestitisti neque consensum prebuisti et Waldradae et aliis ab hac sede apostolica excommunicatis non communicasti, corpus et sanguis domini Iesu Christi prosit tibi in vitam aeternam'.¹⁰⁰ Regino then makes his point explicit. Those who had not falsely participated in communion managed to evade death.¹⁰¹

Regino was subscribing to what Dr. Airlie has remarked was Hincmar's 'thin-lipped relishing of Lothar's end', and the abbot's comments do bear out Karl Leyser's conclusion that the death of the king represented, 'not only a manifestation of divine wrath against the divorce-raddled Lothar but against all his kingdom...the very existence of Lotharingia was no longer pleasing to God'.¹⁰² But in one

⁹⁷ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 156.

⁹⁸ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 154.

⁹⁹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 869, 97.

¹⁰⁰ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 869, 97.

¹⁰¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 869, 97.

¹⁰² S. R. Airlie, 'Private Bodies and the Body Politic in the Divorce Case of Lothar II', *P&P*, clxi (1998), 3 – 38, at 37; K. Leyser, 'Early Medieval Warfare', *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries* (London, 1994), 44, quoted in Airlie, 'Private Bodies', 36.

important way Regino and Hincmar differ. The archbishop's take on the death of the king as a demonstration of divine wrath was formed only with the knowledge of Lothar's demise in 869. Regino took this outcome as a motif for the whole reign and for him the years of Lothar's rule were nothing more than the accruing stages of damnation and the calamitous outcome for both king and kingdom of his plan to divorce Theutberga and marry Waldrada. Ultimately, Regino's text is not a statement of a resilient Lotharingian identity. It was, in fact, a distinctly 'anti-Lotharingian' text, and it is clear that Regino used the *regnum Lotharii* with this larger theme in mind. The old kingdom was given a clear and continuous history in the text of the Chronicle so that it could conform to Regino's desired narrative of decline. In the end, this means that we cannot safely look to the text for confirmation of the *regnum Lotharii*'s presence in the late-ninth century political landscape.

Regino's Chronicle, therefore, serves to epitomise the problems which we face in reconstructing the history of Lotharingia. We are reliant upon a collection of mostly external sources each with their own conflicting perspectives, agendas and associations; even ostensibly Lotharingian sources like Regino himself cannot be removed from the east-Frankish context in which his text was composed and transmitted. In acknowledging these problems, however, this thesis argues that it is this very complexity and ambiguity observed in the sources that explains the position of the *regnum Lotharii* in the late-ninth century. In essence, the central argument that runs through the initial part of this thesis is that older positivist perspectives in the historiography, based on the apparent consistency of the phrase *regnum Lotharii*, are now no longer fully credible, and that the survival of the terminology reflects less an existing substantive political entity than it mirrors the elasticity of this idea, and

the creativity with which contemporaries could approach and exploit it. Rather than blindly accepting the phrase at face value, which as we saw is an established historiographical approach going back to the work of Mohr in the 1950s, this thesis will embrace the challenges thrown-up by the source material and will seek to uncover how this elastic idea was exploited towards particular ends.

The problem of the external narrative sources is bypassed somewhat by the surviving *corpus* of Carolingian diplomas and charters but even here problems of agenda emerge. Royal diplomas were intended to function as statements of royal majesty and authority and were therefore, for all their formulaic language, just as susceptible to the demands of political and ideological purposes as the narrative sources. With the conclusion of the Meerssen conference in August 870, Charles the Bald and Louis the German brought to an end the political entity of the *regnum Lotharii*. As we have seen, that phrase did survive in the source material, but as the next chapter will show, such instances of survival cannot be reduced to a common meaning or interpretation. The phrase itself survived in use in Carolingian royal diplomas, and an examination of these shows how its use was conditioned by quite specific political and ideological concerns. At the end, however, this does not invalidate our search for the historical Lotharingia. The problems of the sources in fact serve to reveal a more credible interpretation of the late-ninth century *regnum Lotharii*. It may not have been an immutable and substantive region, for that had been demolished by Charles and Louis at Meerssen but, as we shall now see, it remained a potentially potent label which kings, and later others, could exploit as a tool in the intensification and articulation of their own power and authority.

Chapter 2

Competing Royal Images of Lotharingia.

2.1: Introduction.

It was with a little satisfaction, perhaps, that the early tenth-century chronicler Regino of Prüm recalled the final resting place of the dead king Lothar II. Having successfully concluded his negotiations with the Pope in the case of Queen Theutberga, the king left Rome in high spirits but falling ill to plague shortly thereafter, managed only to reach Piacenza before finally expiring on August 8th 869. In the view of Regino of Prüm, the king's death and the accompanying high numbers of other victims within the royal entourage had fatally weakened the formerly abundant strength and nobility of the middle kingdom.¹ Writing long after the events, of course, the monk of Prüm had the benefit of hindsight but his comments certainly appear judicious in the light of the subsequently unopposed coronation of Charles the Bald at Metz a mere two weeks after hearing of the demise of his nephew in Italy. It was an event that marked the beginning of a process over the next quarter century in which the former kingdom of Lothar underwent a series of territorial realignments and partitions within the *regnum Francorum*.

The burial of Lothar II at Piacenza must rank as one of the most poorly documented of all Carolingian royal funerals.² We possess nothing like Hincmar's record of the hasty arrangements for the burial of the rapidly putrefying corpse of

¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 869, 98; *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 156.

² It was for this reason, perhaps, that Nelson offers no comment on Lothar II's funeral in her, 'Carolingian Royal Funerals', in *Rituals of Power: From Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, ed. F. Theuvs and J. L. Nelson (Leiden, 2000), 131-184.

Charles the Bald in the Italian sun of 877, or even any idea of just who took the lead in arranging the burial of the king.³ Contemporary reports were not even in full agreement over the date of the king's death. According to Hincmar, Lothar had died early on the morning of August 8th while the *Annals of Fulda* recorded his death, albeit erroneously, in the month of July.⁴ Nor do all the sources report exactly where the king was buried. The two main contemporary accounts both recorded that Lothar had died at Piacenza but of the two it was only Hincmar who offered a further cryptic note on the whereabouts of the king's inhumation, 'in quodam monasteriolo secus ipsam civitatem terrae mandatur'.⁵ Yet, such near-silences may not be coincidental. Hincmar was not above making hidden, barbed comments about the death and burial of his own master, Charles the Bald and perhaps such a meaning may lie behind the archbishop's comments that only a few attended Lothar's inhumation at this certain, unnamed - and therefore not worthy of remembrance - little monastery in Piacenza.⁶ Only a note made by Ado of Vienne in his *Chronicle* and a reference in one contemporary royal diploma remains to confirm that the king was indeed buried in Piacenza, and in the church of St-Antonine.⁷ Much like the quick decision made by William Marshal to bury Henry II at the monastery of Fontevraud rather than risk the dignity of the royal body on a long journey to the king's preferred location of Grandmont in the summer heat of July 1189, immediate practicality must have lain

³ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 877, 217.

⁴ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 156; *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 869, 68, 'in regnum suum redire volens apud Plasentiam Italiae urbem mense Iulio diem obit, plurimique de optimatibus illius in eodem itinere consumpti sunt'. A contemporary fragment of the *Annales Lobienses* records, 'Lotharius vero Romam vocatus et excommunicatus, in Placentia reversus diem clausit extremam' (*Annales Lobienses*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH SS*, II (Hanover, 1829), a. 870, 194). For other later source entries see, B.M., no. 1325e.

⁵ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 156; Parisot, *Lorraine*, 321.

⁶ For Hincmar's moralising in the *Annales Bertiniani*, Nelson, 'Carolingian Royal Funerals', 164.

⁷ Ado of Vienne, *Chronicon*, 323; *Die Urkunden Karls III*, ed. P. Kehr, *MGH Diplomata regum Germaniae ex stirpe Karolinorum* (Berlin, 1936-7), [hereafter, *DCharles the Fat*], nr. 28.

behind the decision to bury Lothar II at the monastery of St-Antoine.⁸ Despite this, however, Lothar II's burial there can be used by way of an introduction to offer some observations on the fate of the *regnum* in August 869.

The death of an early medieval king was a crucial moment in which ideas of legitimate continuity were at their most focussed as potential and competing successors struggled to establish their credentials as a future ruler. Hence, even though Lothar II's own father, the emperor Lothar, had been absent from the funeral of Louis the Pious at the monastery of St-Arnulf of Metz in June 840, the increasing tensions amongst the surviving royal sons quickly saw Lothar I advertise his claims to be Louis' true heir by undertaking the provision of his father's *memoria* at that monastery.⁹ Control of the royal funeral offered an initial opportunity to claim legitimate succession at a 'critical moment in the transfer of power from one ruler to his successor'.¹⁰ This is well seen in the next generation of Carolingian kings when on the death of Louis the German, Louis the Younger brought the dead king for burial at the monastery of Lorsch, a site clearly within his own territories.¹¹ The younger Louis was facing invasion from Charles the Bald and sought to express the continuity of his royal office with that of his father. He was able to do so through his control of the dead king's inhumation. Alongside mortuary rites, messages of continuity were also advertised in the actual sites of royal burial. Louis the Younger

⁸ For the Angevin connection to Fontevraud see C. T. Wood, 'Fontevraud, Dynasticism, and Eleanor of Aquitaine', in *Eleanor of Aquitaine, Lord and Lady*, ed. B. Wheeler and J. C. Parsons (Hampshire, 2003), 407-422, at 415 for the role of the Marshal.

⁹ For a discussion of Louis' funeral, Nelson, 'Carolingian Royal Funerals', 155-160; for Lothar's provision of the emperor's *memoria*, E. Screen, 'The Importance of the emperor: Lothar I and the Frankish civil war, 840-843', *EME*, xii (2003), 25-51, at 35, and for the crucial observation that once fortunes had turned against Lothar I, Charles the Bald was able to undertake this provision at St-Arnulf, *ibid.*, 36.

¹⁰ Nelson, 'Carolingian Royal Funerals', 135.

¹¹ Nelson, 'Carolingian Royal Funerals', 166-169.

attempted to turn the monastery of Lorsch into his dynastic necropolis but the best example remains a series of late ninth century western kings, all of whom were buried at the monastery of St-Denis.¹² That this monastery was perceived by contemporaries as representing the necropolis of the west Frankish kingdom, rather than merely a Carolingian dynastic mausoleum, is seen in the burial there of the Robertine Odo (888-898) in 898.¹³ It seems, then, that the idea of the *regnum* could be given expression in key centres like the monastery of St-Denis and could, despite the various hiatuses of dynastic competition, be provided with a sense of institutional permanence.

It is precisely these contemporary perceptions that make Lothar II's inhumation at Piacenza instructive. The burial of the king's body beyond the limits of his own *regnum* meant that the available messages of legitimate continuity that possession could offer were effectively lost to those with ambitions as his successor. Charles the Bald got around the problem (or at least Hincmar did, and then only in the short-term) by claiming that Lothar's bishops had called the western king to his coronation at Metz on September 9th 869.¹⁴ But the weaknesses of that position were soon revealed by Louis the German's arrival on the scene. Charles' claims as the legitimate successor of Lothar II were revealed as hollow. The burial of the king outwith his kingdom meant that the one clear chance to claim real continuity was lost to those who came in the aftermath of Lothar's death in 869. Ultimately, the fate of Lothar's body reveals something of the nature of his kingdom. Unlike the remains of Charles the Bald, who was to die at Nantua in 877, those of Lothar were never

¹² They are Charles the Bald †877; Louis the Stammerer †879; Louis III †882; Carlomann II †884 and Odo †898.

¹³ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 898, 79.

¹⁴ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 157.

returned for internment in some regnal mausoleum. Lothar remained in the monastery of Piacenza.¹⁵ The fate of the two royal bodies suggests a crucial difference in the nature of their respective *regna*. It suggests that even at this early date the *regnum* of Charles the Bald was coming to possess attributes that encouraged an institutional permanence despite the death of its kings. Lothar's permanent resting place in Piacenza, however, suggests the opposite for the old middle kingdom.¹⁶ As we saw in the introduction, it was the king who gave focus to his kingdom but even with death, possession of the royal body could provide claimants with a tangible representation of political legacy. This did not happen in Lotharingia.

This has important implications for any study of Lotharingia because it forces us to clarify both what historians mean when using the term *regnum Lotharii* and, more importantly, what contemporaries meant when they utilised that terminology in their texts. Our analysis in the last chapter of the major narratives' use of the phrase *regnum Lotharii* argued that it is now no longer possible to see the old kingdom as an immutable and static geo-political institution in the years following the death of Lothar II. Rather, we need to refine our understanding of what contemporaries meant when using such terminology. In this chapter, we shall further the investigation by comparing the differences in the meaning between *regnum Lotharii* made in the diplomas of three Carolingian kings: Charles the Bald,

¹⁵ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 877, 113 for the return of the Charles' remains to St-Denis where he had made arrangements for his burial, *Recueil des actes de Charles II le Chauve, roi de France*, ed. G. Tessier (Paris, 1940-55), [hereafter *DCharles the Bald*], nrs. 240, 247, 379.

¹⁶ The fact of this western permanence is strongly suggested by Hincmar's use of the term 'regnum Franciae' in his description of the Quierzy arrangements put in place for his absence in Italy in 877, *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 877, 213; interestingly, the Annals of Xanten tell us that the bodies of his *optimates* who died in Italy were returned north for burial (*Annales Xantenses*, a. 869, 28, 'Et idcirco eum Dominus Roma redeuntem terribiliter percussit cum omnibus pene suis optimatibus. Quorum corpora pariter Coloniam asportata atque humata sunt').

Louis the German and Charles the Simple. This is a deliberately limited perspective and is designed to show how the legacy of Lothar II, that is the use of the terminology *regnum Lotharii*, was deployed in a variety of ways by kings. The death and burial of Lothar II at Piacenza had the effect of opening up for Carolingian kings the possibility of creating their own image of the *regnum Lotharii*. As in the major narratives, such imagery was used to pursue particular political, ideological or rhetorical agendas.

2.2: The *regnum Lotharii* in the diplomas of Charles the Bald.

It was at the court of Charles the Bald that the potential offered by Lothar II's legacy was expressed by royal ideologues like Hincmar of Rheims. The impact of the political messages intended by the coronation at Metz, that Charles now ruled a plurality of *regna*, is seen in the dismissive report of the eastern annalist that the king, *quasi duo regna possessurus*, now haughtily demanded recognition as *imperator* and *augustus*.¹⁷ Yet, the events at Metz were not intended for the consumption only by the Lotharingian élite or as a somewhat flash-in-the-pan piece of political opportunism designed to stop dead the claims of Louis the German to an equal share of his nephew's kingdom. These political ideas continued as an expression of the western court's political programme throughout the final years of Charles the Bald's reign. As the Annals of Fulda were aware, this programme was designed to promote an imperial image of Charles' kingship. It is a political programme that is also detected in his diplomas, and I will argue that part of this

¹⁷ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 869, 69-70.

imperial imagery was the inclusion of a dating formula that explicitly stated the years of the king's succession to Lothar II.

On the very day of his coronation at Metz, for example, Charles gave to the community of St-Arnulf at Metz a chapel dedicated to St-Hilary for their upkeep and the provisioning of the lighting. The diploma issued on this occasion concluded with the date formula, 'Data V iduum septembrium, indictione secunda, anno XXX regnante Karolo gloriosissimo rege e[t primo] in successione regni Hlotharii'.¹⁸ The presence of the king's son Carloman, who had just received this valuable *honor* from his father, and who possessed too the monasteries of St-Amand and St-Riquier, suggests that this political imagery, that the king ruled over his and Lothar's kingdom, was not simply a piece of Carolingian charter legalese, but was a message intended for reception by the élites who gathered around the king on such occasions.

Even in allowing for the recent warning that the role of the beneficiary ought to be taken more seriously as a contributory factor in the issue of Carolingian royal diplomas, the general production of these invaluable documents at the political centre means that they provide a crucial perspective on the political ideas current at court at a particular time.¹⁹ Recent studies have shown how the apparent formulaic nature of these documents conceals any number of political statements that mirror transformations in the political landscape itself.²⁰

¹⁸ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 328.

¹⁹ M. Mersiowsky, 'Towards a reappraisal of Carolingian sovereign charters', *Charters and the Use of the Written Word in Medieval Society*, ed. K. Heidecker (Turnhout, 2000), 15-25; Screen, 'Importance', 31.

²⁰ B. Merta, 'Politische Theorie in den Königsurkunden Pippins I', *MIÖG*, c (1992), 117-131; *eadem*, 'Recht und Propaganda in Narrationes karolingischer Herrscherurkunden', *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalters* (Vienna, 1994), 141-157; *eadem*, 'Why Royal Charters? A look at their use in Carolingian Bavaria', *Vom Nutzen des Schreibens: Soziales Gedächtnis, Herrschaft und Besitz im Mittelalter*, ed.

In the aftermath of Louis the Pious' deposition, for example, his son Louis, the king of Bavaria, proclaimed his new political horizons in the adoption of a new dating formula, which appeared at this time in his diplomas, and which were dated to his reign, 'in orientali Francia'; it was a style that he continued to use following both his return to his father in February 834, and the emperor's subsequent, and rather successful, attempts to restrict him to Bavaria from 838.²¹ As much as *arengae* or *narrationes*, charter date formulae also expressed explicit political ideas, and as the example of the young Louis the German's adoption of a new formula in 834 shows, such statements were not necessarily reflections of political reality. They served as statements of political intents as well as reflecting political reality.

It is in this vein that we should also understand the use of *regnum Lotharii* in the date formulae of Charles the Bald's diplomas. Certainly, the addition of the formula *in successione regni Hlotharii* in diplomas issued to Lotharingian beneficiaries, or in those issued at locations within the limits of Lothar's old kingdom, in the wake of the Metz coronation, does suggest that the king sought to give substance to idea of regnal distinction which had been played out at his coronation. We see the formula used, for example, in diplomas issued at Gondreville to the monastery of St-Evre, at Aachen for the western monastery of St-Riquier, and in one issued to the chamberlain Engelramnus in his new capacity as abbot of Maroilles in the Lotharingian *pagus* of the Hainault.²²

W. Pohl and P. Herold (Vienna, 2002), 183-191; H. Wolfram, 'Political Theory and Narrative in Charters', *Viator*, xxvi (1995), 39-51, at 40.

²¹ Wolfram, 'Political Theory', 48. For the later period of Louis the Pious' reign, J. L. Nelson, 'The Last Years of Louis the Pious', *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814-840)*, ed. P. Godman and R. Collins (Oxford, 1990), 147-60; Innes, *State and Society*, 198-208.

²² *DCharles the Bald*, nrs. 330, 333, 334.

By way of a comparison, strictly west Frankish diplomas, such as that issued by the king to his *fidelis* Hadebertus while at St-Denis in April 870, were issued without any additional regnal component in the date formulae.²³ The western court did make a distinction in who it considered ‘west Frankish’ and ‘Lotharingian’ and reflected this choice in the nature of the date formulae applied in the diplomas. Such apparent distinctions within the *formulae*, however, should not be read as evidence of any continuing recognition of regional political forces. Rather, as the nature of the subsequent use of the formula shows, the court was in fact acutely tuned to fluctuations in the political landscape, and that the appearance or disappearance of this imperial styled formula reflects assessments on the part of the court as to the suitability of broadcasting such bold statements at particular moments in time.

The specific west-Frankish focus of the diplomas that survive for the early months of 870 mean that we should not be surprised that we do not encounter in them the new additional date formula based on Charles’ succession to Lothar II. Yet, on 22 July the king issued a diploma at his western palace of Ponthion in which he confirmed an exchange of properties made between himself and Gerard, the count of Vienne.²⁴ This is a document in which we might have expected the new formula to appear. As we will see further in Chapter Three, Gerard of Vienne was a longstanding servant to the royal dynasty of the middle kingdom. He had witnessed only recently a diploma that itself carried the date formula, ‘Facta noticia die martis in mense apreli, anno primo co Lottarius rex obit’.²⁵ If Gerard, in the aftermath of

²³ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 336, ‘Data [nonis] april., indictione tertia, anno XXX regnante Karolo gloriosissimo rege. Actum monasterio sancti Dyonisii’; *idem*, nrs. 337, 339-342 also lacked the additional formula.

²⁴ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 342.

²⁵ *Recueil des chartes de l’abbaye de Cluny*, eds. A. Bernard and A. Breul, 6 vols (Paris, 1876-1903), I, nr. 15; Parisot, *Lorraine*, 393. For further comments on Gerard of Vienne see below, 77ff.

Lothar's death, remained as a representative of continuing Lotharingian political distinctiveness, then it is in Charles' diploma of July 870 that we would expect to see it acknowledged. The formula, therefore, is conspicuous by its absence in this document. Why was it not used?

By July 870 Charles' initial successes in Lotharingia had evaporated as a reinvigorated Louis the German made his claims for a share to the *regnum Lotharii*. Oaths had already been exchanged before Easter that acknowledged the need to divide the kingdom and, by May, messengers had arrived from the east to begin the negotiations of division.²⁶ Such confident claims, that Charles was the heir to Lothar II, and that he ruled imperially over multiple *regna*, which had been the message in the immediate aftermath of the king's death in 869, now sounded hollow and embarrassingly inopportune. The disappearance from the royal diplomas of the new date formula at precisely this moment in time was, therefore, a necessary volte-face in political imagery at the western court. Louis' arrival on the scene had revealed Charles' claims as nothing more than empty bluster, and a defensive court now dropped this particular component of its monarchical imperial imagery.

Nonetheless, following the successful division of the *regnum Lotharii* at Meerssen on August 8th 870, the western court was once again able to begin reusing the date formula in suitable royal diplomas. In late November of that year, and following a campaign to dislodge Gerard from his power-base around Vienne, Charles resided at the city and issued a diploma that confirmed lands in the possession of the monastery of St-Philibert. As we would expect, the document was

²⁶ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 870, 169.

dated both to the reign of the king from 840 and his succession to Lothar II.²⁷ But here we see again the influence that political events had upon the expression of political theory in the diplomas. Although over a year had passed since Charles' coronation at Metz, the date formula added to this document stated that it was enacted in the first year since his succession to Lothar. This was not a mistake on the part of the chancery and it ought, perhaps, to be seen as a recognition that the division made at Meerssen now essentially marked the *terminus post quem* from which the king's rule in his newly acquired regions was now dated. This was a brief reappearance, however, and the formula disappeared once again until April 872.²⁸ Again, *Realpolitik* on the part of the western court offers a credible explanation. During the journey south on the campaign against Gerard of Vienne the king's son Carloman, the same recipient of St-Arnulf on the day of the king's coronation at Metz, fled the king's entourage to begin rebellion.²⁹ His ambition was a royal title and a kingdom composed from the spoils, it seems, of the *regnum Lotharii*.

Ordinarily, the claims of a third royal son to a share of any Carolingian kingdom would have been quite negligible but this was especially so in the west.³⁰ Charles the Bald had already earmarked the component parts of his kingdom, Neustria and Aquitaine, for Carloman's two elder brothers, Louis and Charles, and it was in the light of this that his third son was tonsured as a cleric at the age of five.³¹

²⁷ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 344, 'Datum VIII Kalendas decembris, indictione II, anno XXVIII regnante Karolo gloriosissimo rege et in successione regni Hlotharii anno I. Actum Vienna'.

²⁸ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 360.

²⁹ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 870.

³⁰ On Carloman, Airlie, 'Political Behaviour', 184-193; Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 226-231; eadem, 'A Tale of Two Princes: Politics, Text and Ideology in a Carolingian Annal', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, x (1998), 103-141.

³¹ Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 226.

The king was excluding Carloman from the succession but he sought to compensate him by opening up the possibilities of a glittering and profitable career in the church. Indeed, after his consecration as a deacon in 860, Carloman began to receive abbacies from his father: St-Médard of Soissons in 860, both St-Germain of Auxerre and St-Amand in 866, and St-Arnulf of Metz, St-Riquier and Lobbes in 869.³² But by this later date Carloman's position, and his potential prospects, had already begun to change. The death of his brother Charles in 866 had opened up the possibility, if only momentarily, that Carloman would be re-deployed by his father as king in Aquitaine.³³ Charles the Bald's decision not to promote him does not seem to have upset Carloman too much for in 868 he led a contingent of royal troops against the Loire Vikings.³⁴ It was the events of the following year, however, which brought matters to a head with his father. The acquisition of additional lands in Lotharingia had created the basis for a potential sub-kingdom at some point in the future but it soon became clear to Carloman that he was not the likely beneficiary of any rearrangement of succession plans within the royal family. Certainly, he received a number of rich monasteries from the spoils of 869, but his father's marriage to the Lotharingian Richildis in October of that year spelled out the likely nature of any reconstitution of the royal family by the king in the years to come. Any redrawing of the succession plans, and the recipient of the Lotharingian acquisitions, would not be Carloman but rather the male offspring of the newly married couple.³⁵

³² *DCharles the Bald*, nrs. 303, 333, 338; Folcuin, *Gesta Abbatum Lobbiensium*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH SS*, IV (Hanover, 1841), 52-74, at 61 for his possession of St-Arnulf; *Carmina Centulensia*, ed. L. Traube, *MGH Poetae Latinae* (Berlin, 1896), III, nr. 105; *MGH Epistolae*, VI, 179-80 for the complaints of the monks of St-Médard. See also, A. Dierkens, *Abbayes et Chapitres entre Sambre et Meuse (VII^e-XI^e siècles)* (Sigmaringen, 1985), 110, 130.

³³ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 866, 130. As it turned out Louis the Stammerer was sent to Aquitaine in the following year, *ibid.*, a. 877, 135. The case of Pippin II of Aquitaine offered a precedent of a cleric returning to lay status, Nelson, 'Two Princes', 110.

³⁴ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 868, 151.

³⁵ The provision for Charles the Bald by Louis the Pious offers a useful parallel to this problem, Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 73ff.

The king was well aware that his remarriage was a provocative act and so when rumours began to circulate at court that his son was ‘stirring up plots’ against him, Charles responded quickly by stripping Carloman of his monastic *honores* and imprisoning him in the fortress of Senlis where he remained, significantly, through the period of the difficult negotiations with Louis the German at Meerssen.³⁶ Nonetheless, within weeks of his release and despite some kind of profession of loyalty to his father, Carloman escaped to begin rebellion.

The evidence shows that Carloman did focus his activities in the lands of the old *regnum Lotharii*. In all likelihood, it was the monastery of Lobbes that acted as his base and from where he struck out southwards down the Meuse valley towards Mouzon and the environs of Toul.³⁷ However, once the king had managed to re-establish his position in these regions through a series of ‘harsh reprisals’, the young prince fled into Transjurane Burgundy where, at the city of Besançon, he finally submitted to his father in November 871.³⁸ According to Hincmar, Charles promised his son that he would journey to the *provincia Belgica* to take counsel there in the matter of providing for Carloman.³⁹ Significantly, it had been to the *provincia Belgica* that Carloman directed his initial attentions in late 869, and the reappearance of the phrase here, in the entry for 873, does indicate that Carloman was seeking to construct a kingdom of his own upon the foundations of the *regnum Lotharii*.⁴⁰ In the end, however, Charles had no intention of renegotiating his son’s position within the ranks of the royal family. The conclusion of the whole episode did not come

³⁶ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 870, 171; Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 227.

³⁷ *Annales Laubienses, Leodienses*, ed. G. H. Pertz, *MGH SS*, IV (Hanover, 1841), a. 870, 15.

³⁸ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 871, 179; *Annales Laubienses*, a. 873, 15.

³⁹ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 871, 179.

⁴⁰ Nelson, ‘Two Princes’, 112-113.

until 873 when the king, at an assembly convoked at Quierzy, orchestrated a series of procedures that procured the demotion of his son from his ecclesiastical rank and his condemnation to death as a layman. In a final demonstration of royal mercy, however, Charles commuted this judgement to one of blinding.

This brief chronology of Carloman's rebellion against Charles the Bald is provided as a parallel to that very period of time in which the additional Lotharingian date formula disappeared from west Frankish royal diplomas. The geographical focus of Carloman's military campaigns shows that he did seek to make his claim to royalty in lands recently left without its own king. Charles' response to these demands was inevitably heavy handed, but one other way of rebutting Carloman's claims was through the deliberate playing down of the Lotharingian aspect of Charles' kingdom. We have seen already how this legacy of the *regnum Lotharii* was used deliberately by the court to produce a clearly imperial image of Charles' kingship. Once the genie was released from the bottle, however, this was a legacy that was available for others to claim. When Carloman did make that claim, the court responded in its own way by removing the statements of Lotharingian political distinctiveness, which had earlier been an efficacious way of promoting an imperial image of Charles' kingship, from the diplomas. In response to Carloman's demands for a Lotharingian kingdom of his own, the chancery necessarily dropped its own previous use of that terminology. As such, the chancery now denied the 'Lotharingian' provenance of the king's new territories.

It was on April 11th 872, significantly a year in which nothing is heard of Carloman's activities, that the king issued a diploma in which the date formula

reappeared.⁴¹ The document was issued at the great monastery of St-Denis near Paris and granted lands to the monks of the western monastery of St-Andéol. This document, therefore, marks a new phase in the use of the ‘Lotharingian’ date formula in the diplomas of Charles the Bald. Despite neither being issued from a Lotharingian site, nor destined for a Lotharingian beneficiary, it was dated, ‘anno XXXII regnante Karolo gloriosissimo rege et in successione Lotarii regis anno tertio’. What encouraged this new direction in the use of the formula? As we shall see below, a new political crisis confronted Charles the Bald from mid 872, and part of the king’s response to it was a necessary reassertion of his claims to rule the *regnum Lotharii*.

Although the claims of Louis II of Italy to the *regnum Lotharii* had been pursued vigorously in the wake of his brother’s death, the emperor’s chances of succeeding Lothar in the north were effectively neutralised as the older generation of Carolingians co-operated to exclude him from their carve-up of the *regnum*.⁴² But in 872, with the Carloman affair under control but still not yet fully resolved, a nervous regime in the west was confronted with the news of an apparent renewal of imperial claims to the *regnum Lotharii*. According to Hincmar, Charles celebrated Easter [March 30th] at St-Denis and afterwards set out to a conference with the Empress Engelberga that had been arranged to take place at the Burgundian monastery of St-Maurice d’Agaune.⁴³ *En route*, however, the royal itinerary was changed following the receipt of worrying reports that the empress had planned also to meet with Louis

⁴¹ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 360.

⁴² Hadrian II sent several letters north warning against encroachments into the *regnum Lotharii* which, he asserted, belonged to the emperor, see *Hadriani II papae epistolae*, ed. F. Perels, *Epistola Karolini Aevi*, IV (Berlin, 1925), nrs. 16-19.

⁴³ For this monastery see M. Zuffery, *Die Abtei Saint-Maurice d’Agaune in Hochmittelalter (830-1258)* (Göttingen, 1988).

the German at Trento in May.⁴⁴ Further in his entry, Hincmar records the fears at court, ‘et ipse [Louis the German], ut praedictum est, apud Trientum cum Ingelberga loquens, partem regni Hlotharii quam contra Karolum accepit, neglectis sacramentis inter eos pactis, sine consensu ac conscientia hominum quondam Hlotharii, qui se illi commendauerunt, clam reddidit’.⁴⁵

Hincmar’s anger was directed here against Louis the German but it is clear that much of the court’s fear must have been concerned with the potential attraction of imperial lordship in the north. Certainly, Carloman’s revolt had just provided an indication of how fragile was Charles’ position in his Lotharingian lands and the emperor was a potentially attractive lord. Louis had earlier possessed enough support in Provence to secure the acquisition of a portion of that *regnum* in a division made with Lothar II following the death of their brother Charles in 863.⁴⁶ At any rate, the reappearance on April 11th of the date formula stressing Charles’ succession to Lothar coincided neatly with Hincmar’s account of the events of early 872, ‘Post Pascha obviam Ingelberge imperatrici sicut ei per suos missos mandaverat, ad Sanctum Mauricum perrexit; sed non incerto comperiens nuntio eandem Ingelbergam apud Trientum cum Hludouico rege Germaniae in mense maio locuturam, a conducto deflexit itinere et ad Siluacum venit’.⁴⁷ Easter fell on March 30th in 872 and this means that it was precisely in the earliest days of April that Charles got the news of the planned meeting between Engelberga and Louis the German. Hincmar later noted that it was at this meeting that Louis offered to

⁴⁴ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 873, 185.

⁴⁵ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 873, 185.

⁴⁶ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 863, 96.

⁴⁷ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 872, 185.

secretly return his portion of the *regnum Lotharii* but this must have been known to Charles in April when he decided to call off his meeting with the empress.⁴⁸

The closeness in time of these events with the reappearance of the term *regnum Lotharii* in Charles' diplomas strongly indicates, therefore, that the formula's return represented, in effect, a political response to perceived threats at the western court to Charles' possession of his Lotharingian lands. Indeed, it was precisely to stress his credentials there that, on September 9th 873, which significantly was the third anniversary of Charles' coronation as Lothar's heir at Metz, the king came to the palace of Gondreville and extracted professions of loyalty from the assembled ecclesiastical and secular ranks. While the bishops offered a *professio* that Charles would continue to possess the spiritual favour that saw the *regnum* delivered to him in the first place, the king also oaths of loyalty from his lay support who promised to defend.⁴⁹ These were the responses of a nervous regime to imperial pretensions in the north.

The assembly at Gondreville shows how the court could respond to challenges by staging rituals that sought to reinforce the bonds holding political society together. But such grand occasions did not offer the only opportunities to express such ideas of political theory. At a lower, less obvious level, the royal chancery too could contribute to the projection of these images of royalty in the production of royal diplomas. The renewal of imperial claims to the *regnum Lotharii* was met in them with a renewed emphasis on Charles as the successor to Lothar II. Moreover, this was a message which the court was no longer content to broadcast

⁴⁸ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 872, 186.

⁴⁹ *MGH Capit*, II, nr. 278, 341-42.

simply at those moments, as had previously been the case, when the king took on a particularly Lotharingian guise. As the 872 document shows, this was now a message broadcast in royal diplomas issued increasingly at sites, and for beneficiaries, from throughout the western kingdom at large.

It is clear that the 872 diploma marked the beginning of an increasing trend in west Frankish chancery practice to incorporate the additional date-formula regardless of any Lotharingian connection or not. On October 12th 873, for example, the king issued a diploma from Le Mans which confirmed the privileges of the monastery of St-Vincent and which was dated, 'anno XXXIV regnante Karolo glorissimo rege et in successione Clotharii regis anno IIII'.⁵⁰ That a deliberate change had occurred regarding the attitude of the chancery in when to apply the additional date component is suggested by two diplomas issued by the king in February 874. Both of these documents were issued at St-Quentin and, despite being for the west Frankish monasteries of Montieramey and St-John of Angers, concluded with the additional date-formula. By way of comparison are two diplomas previously issued to the same institutions in which the chancery did not include the amended date form. Given the dating of these two earlier documents to February and March of 871, which was precisely the period of Carloman's rebellion against his father, then we would not expect to see the addition of the new date-form. But this is precisely the point. That we see them in the two later documents does suggest a shift in the chancery's approach in the matter of when to utilise the terminology.

Overall, from 872 there survives a remarkable series of diplomas which were dated using the formula of the king's succession to Lothar II but which actually

possessed no obvious Lotharingian association or connection.⁵¹ The beneficiaries are spread across the western kingdom: St-Bertin, St-Denis, Autun, Dijon, Angers, Tours, Châlons-sur-Marne and Bordeaux.⁵² This, as we shall see below, was in stark contrast to the attitude of the eastern Carolingians. In the reign of Charles the Bald, however, the western court deliberately broadcasted an image of imperial rulership and one medium of this was the applications of the Lotharingian date formula in royal diplomas.

The best examples of this development are seen in a series of diplomas issued by the king following his successful campaign to secure Italy and the imperial title on the death of the Emperor Louis in 875.⁵³ On September 29th at Pavia, Charles issued a diploma to the Italian church of Arezzo for the upkeep of the lighting and the sustenance of the clergy. The document, which survives in its original form, was dated using the whole array of formulae available to the western chancery, ‘anno XXXVI regnante Karolo rege et in successione Hlotarii VI et in successionis Hluduouuici I’⁵⁴. In early October, the monastery of Donzère was the recipient of a royal diploma similarly dated.⁵⁵ Indeed, Charles’ very first imperial diploma was issued for the church of Benevento and was dated, ‘anno XXXVII regni domni Caroli in Francia et in successione Hlotharii sexto et imperii eius primo’.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 360.

⁵¹ *DCharles the Bald*, nrs. 360, 367, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 376, 377, 379, 383, 384, 409, 410, 411, 412, 414, 421, 423, 425, 441.

⁵² *DCharles the Bald*, nrs. 361 (St-Amand), 363 (St-Germain-des-Près), 367 (St-Vincent-au-Mans), 370 (St-Bertin), 371-72 (St-Jean of Angers), 373/376 (St-Julien-de-Brioude), 377 (St-Martin, à Autun), 378 (St-Philibert), 379-80 (St-Denis), 409 (Bonlieu), 410 (Solignac), 419 (St-Bénigne, à Dijon), 423 (Corbie), 425 (Compiègne), 441 (St-Martin, à Tours).

⁵³ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 875, 84; *Annales Vedastini*, a. 875, 40.

⁵⁴ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 383.

⁵⁵ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 384.

⁵⁶ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 400.

These diplomas serve to reinforce the image we have seen already of a western chancery actively responding to developments in the political landscape and adapting their formulae in the construction of particular images of royal authority. Throughout the entirety of Charles' reign his chancery sought to construct a distinctly imperial aura around his kingship and this was served, in part, I argue, by the addition of the Lotharingian date formula to his diplomas. In this way, the imperial nature of his kingship, as a *rex* ruling over many *regna*, was advertised to the regional elites who travelled to his court in search of royal patronage.

This imperial ideology was long harboured by the western court and was encouraged long before the imperial coronation of 875. Professor Nelson has identified early pretensions to this imperial style of kingship in 849 when Charles' seeming defeat of Pippin II of Aquitaine was followed by a declaration in the royal diplomas that Charles was now, 'king of the Franks and Aquitainians'.⁵⁷ A diploma issued for the monastery of St-Martin at Tours was affixed with an imperial style gold bull in 862, 'hitherto a prerogative of the emperors'.⁵⁸ The court, indeed, was even seeking to claim the Roman imperial past for Charles. The Edict of Pitrês in 864 referred to the Roman emperors as the king's *predecessores*.⁵⁹ It is into this context of ideological confidence and creativity that we ought to see the events at Metz in 869. The plurality of *regna* ruled by the king was a defining feature of ruler imagery at the court of Charles the Bald and his coronation at Metz was simply another stage in this construction. As a less obvious level, however, the date formulae of the royal diplomas were also utilised to present particular images to the

⁵⁷ *DCharles the Bald*, nrs. 113 and 114; Nelson, 'Translating Images', 92.

⁵⁸ Nelson, 'Translating Images', 92.

⁵⁹ *Edictum Pistense*, *MGH Capit.* II, n. 273, 310–328 at 326; Nelson, 'Translating Images', 93 at n. 24; eadem, 'The Reign of Charles the Bald: a survey', 16.

kingdom and in this chapter we have seen how in Charles' reign the varying use of the Lotharingian date formula responded to the currents of political life itself. We can see this, finally, in a diploma issued at Cologne in September 876 to the church of Arezzo, during the period of the king's attempt to gain the lands of his recently deceased brother, Louis the German. The document was unsurprisingly dated, 'XXXVII regni domni Karoli imperatoris in Franciam, et in successione Hlotharii VII, et imperii II et successionis Hludowici regis I'.⁶⁰ Ultimately, the changing use of date formulae in the diplomas of Charles the Bald reflected a process of improvisation in which the chancery was continuously attempting to evolve an imagery of imperial kingship for the king. From such a perspective, therefore, the dating formulae do not represent evidence of an otherwise a static political order but rather reflect, at least in the case of the *regnum Lotharii*, an elastic legacy which could be variously utilised by kings in constructing images of rulership. These formulae were ultimately malleable and were altered as political fortune or ambitions changed.⁶¹ The disappearance of this confident royal imagery with the death of Charles in 877 and the succession of his son, Louis the Stammerer, is reflected in the complete disappearance of the Lotharingian dating formula from royal diplomas to even Lotharingian beneficiaries.⁶²

The point is that the *regnum Lotharii* was a component of royal imagery that was available to kings in the construction of their own styles of rulership. It was an elastic enough concept that it was used in different ways by successive regimes. So,

⁶⁰ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 413.

⁶¹ See, *DCharles the Bald*, nrs. 403–409, 415, 420, 422, 428, 430–431, 434–440, 442–443, 445–446, in which the 'in successione Hlotharii' dating clause was replaced by an imperial dating clause.

⁶² *Recueil des actes de Louis II le Bègue, Louis III et Carloman II, rois de France*, ed. R.-H. Bautier (Paris, 1978), [hereafter, *DLouis the Stammerer*], nrs. 4, 7, 20, 29.

just as Charles the Bald incorporated the term into the dating formula of his diplomas to present a particularly imperial image of his rule, it is certainly worth noting that Louis the Stammerer did not employ the formula in a comparable fashion. This absence does not say anything, however, about the changing position of Lotharingia in an otherwise static political landscape. Indeed, the attendance of Bishop Arnold of Toul at Louis' coronation at Compiègne in December 877 shows that the magnates of that region continued to look to the western court. The disappearance of *regnum Lotharii* from the western royal diplomas, in fact, only serves to show that the new regime had a different concern towards royal imagery than that of Charles the Bald.

2.3: The *regnum Lotharii* in the diplomas of Louis the German.

The great elasticity with which the legacy of the *regnum Lotharii* was utilised by the western chancery of Charles the Bald was not mirrored by practice in the eastern kingdom of Louis the German. In this short section we will see just how different was the use of that legacy in the eastern kingdom of Louis the German and in doing will strengthen the argument that the survival of the terminology does not reflect a static and immutable institution of the Frankish political landscape.

During the years that followed his partial acquisition of the *regnum Lotharii*, Charles the Bald increasingly emphasised, through the date formulae of his diplomas, the provenance of his rule in that region as the successor of Lothar II. As an alternative to this example we turn to the royal diplomas of Louis the German who, for the most part and in stark contrast to his brother Charles, continued to date his

diplomas in traditional east-Frankish chancery style, ‘in orientali Francia’.⁶³ Indeed, of the 185 extant royal diplomas of Louis the German there remains only one genuinely contemporary document that deviates from this otherwise normal chancery practice.⁶⁴ Certainly, this document of late November 875, by which the king restored the villa of Rémilly to the monastery of St-Arnulf, carried a date-formula which clearly imitated the west-Frankish style, ‘adeptionis regni Hlotharii’.⁶⁵

A partial explanation for this curious departure from normal chancery practice can be offered on the basis of this document’s extensive reliance on the text of an earlier diploma issued by Charles the Bald in the aftermath of his coronation at Metz and which was now brought by bishop Adventius of Metz to the king for confirmation.⁶⁶ In part this alteration from standard chancery practice reflects a degree of textual reliance of one royal diploma upon another but it is possible to seek also a political explanation.

The later months of 875 were characterised by manoeuvres within the ranks of the Carolingian dynasty over the imperial title left vacant by the death of the emperor Louis II, and the news of which, having reached north of the Alps, had sparked a quick descent into Italy by Charles the Bald and the eastern princes,

⁶³ W. Eggert, *Das ostfränkisch-deutsche Reich in der Auffassung seiner Zeitgenossen* (Vienna-Cologne-Graz, 1973), 268; Hartmann, *Ludwig der Deutsche*, 101-102.

⁶⁴ *Die Urkunden Ludwigs des Deutschen, Karlmanns und Ludwigs des Jüngeren*, ed. P. F. Kehr, *MGH Diplomata regum Germaniae ex stirpe Karolinorum* (Berlin, 1932-34), [hereafter, *DLouis the German/Karlmann/Louis the Younger*], nr. 167 issued on November 23 875 at Metz. The new date-formula is also found in nr. 168, but as the *MGH* editor makes clear, this document was produced in the twelfth century and had as a template the body of original diplomas produced at Metz in 875. The use of the altered date-formula in this document can be interpreted, therefore, as an example of borrowing by the redactor of the later diploma.

⁶⁵ *DLouis the German*, nr. 167, ‘Data VIII kal. decembr. anno. XXXVIII regni Hludouuici serenissimi regis in orientali Frantia regnante et adeptionis regni Hlotharii VI, indictione VIII; actum Mettis civitate in surburbio ad sanctum Arnulfum’.

⁶⁶ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 328.

Carlomann and Charles the Fat.⁶⁷ Angered by the actions of his brother, Louis the German himself undertook what would be the final military campaign of his reign and invaded the western kingdom as a means of drawing his brother back north.⁶⁸ As Wilfried Hartmann has recently suggested, it may be that the occurrence at this point of an altered regnal-year formula reflected for a moment east-Frankish imperial ambitions, and especially now given the quick descent of Charles into the Italian peninsula.⁶⁹ This one instance of an east-Frankish ideological response in close imitation of western chancery practice serves to underline the nature of the position of the *regnum Lotharii* as a spatial and political concept deployed by the Carolingians in the immediate years after 870. The two extremes revealed by the practices of both chanceries suggests that the *regnum Lotharii* remained less a political structure than a flexible ideological concept used by Carolingian kings in the promotion of more ambitious political claims. This means that, in the years after the division of the *regnum* at Meerssen, the occurrences of this language in the source material need interpretation that allows for the obvious variety with which kings themselves approached and exploited the legacy of the *regnum Lotharii*. As we shall see below, however, this distinction between concept and reality had narrowed by the early years of the tenth century and that, in the reign especially of Charles the Simple, the *regnum Lotharii* had again achieved some degree of cohesion as an active and workable political unit. This development is discussed further in the course of the thesis but here a brief jump forward in time is desirable because in doing so we shall turn to the use of *regnum Lotharii* in this king's diplomas and

⁶⁷ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 875, 84 ; *Annales Vedastini*, a. 875, 40.

⁶⁸ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 875, 84, 'Unde Hludowicus rex iratus Karlmannum cum exercitu per Baioriam destinavit in Italiam; ipse vero iuncto sibi aequivoco suo cum manu valida regnum Karoli ingressus est, ut eum de Italia exire compelleret'.

⁶⁹ Hartmann, *Ludwig der Deutsche*, 101.

compare his use of that political legacy with that undertaken by his grandfather, Charles the Bald, and in the east, Louis the German.

2.4: The *regnum Lotharii* in the diplomas of Charles the Simple.

For historians the death in 911 of Louis the Child represents the extinction of one branch of the Carolingian dynasty. Yet, for Charles the Simple, the Carolingian king of the west, the death of his young nephew brought valuable rewards. Although the evidence is somewhat confused it does seem that by the close of 911 the political community of the *regnum Lotharii* had decided to acknowledge Charles the Simple as king.⁷⁰ His diplomas offer a propitious opportunity to investigate briefly the ideological response of an early tenth-century king to the acquisition of this region. The nature of that response will permit valuable comparisons with his ninth-century predecessors, Charles the Bald and Louis the German, and will suggest that, by this period, the response visible in the diplomas was governed by the reality of an existing Lotharingian political community.

As we have seen especially with regards to the diplomas of Charles the Bald, the documents produced by the royal chancery could provide a remarkably sensitive seismograph of fluctuations in the political landscape. The diplomas of his grandson Charles the Simple also provide signs of distinct responses on the part of the chancery to the great political events of that reign. An early example of such a

⁷⁰ *Annales Prumienses*, ed. L. Boschen, *Die Annales Prumienses* (Düsseldorf, 1972), 75-84, a. 911, 'Quo etiam anno Ludowicus rex, filius Arnulfi, moritur, et Carolus occidentaliū rex regnum Lotharii suscepit Kl. Nov'. The *Annales Alammanici* offer the interesting report that Louis was rejected by the Lotharingians and if this has some truth, it probably reflects the final stages of the illness that resulted with the death of the king, 'Hlothariorum principes a Hludowico rege divisi' (*Annales Alamannici*, ed.

response was that which followed the death of King Odo in January 898 when the removal from the scene of this distinctly un-Carolingian royal figure permitted Charles to start confidently proclaiming the renewal of Carolingian kingship.⁷¹ In his diplomas this was expressed in two ways: with the addition of the formula *divina propitiante clementia*, the *invocatio* now started to express statements of apparent divine favour in the rule of Charles the Simple. Also, there was added to the date-formulae of the diplomas an additional component that explicitly stated the reign-years from the moment of Odo's death and was consequently considered to be the moment of the *redintegratio* of Carolingian rule.⁷² Similar changes in the internal make-up of the documents occurred following the king's acquisition of the *regnum Lotharii* in late 911 with a further component added to the date-formulae. From December 20th of that year, when the king awarded the right of fortification to bishop Stephen of Cambrai, royal diplomas now included the formula *largiore vero hereditate indepta* which evidently ought to be interpreted as a response to the acquisition by Charles of a new *regnum*.⁷³

The acquisition of the *regnum Lotharii* by both Charles the Bald in the ninth century and his grandson in the tenth produced clear ideological responses on the part of both royal chanceries which were promulgated through the addition to the diplomas of a series of new *formulae*. In essence, the political sentiment expressed by Charles the Bald in his claims that he ruled *in successione regni Hlotharii* are

W. Lendi, *Untersuchungen zur frühalamannischen Annalistik. Die Murbacher Annalen* (Freiburg, 1971), a. 911)

⁷¹ H. Wolfram, 'Lateinische Herrschertitel im neunten und zehnten Jahrhundert', in *Intitulatio II. Lateinische Herrscher- und Fürstentitel im neunten und zehnten Jahrhundert*, ed. H. Wolfram (Vienna-Cologne-Graz, 1973), 19-178, at 115.

⁷² Wolfram, 'Herrschertitel', 115-6.

⁷³ *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 67 in which the full date formula read, 'Datum. XIII. kl. jan., indictione. XIII., anno. XVIII. regnante Karolo rege gloriosissimo, redintegrante. XIII., largiore vero hereditate indepta I'; Wolfram, 'Herrschertitel', 116.

matched by the claims made by his grandson after 911 that he ruled, 'largiore vero hereditate indepta'. Yet on further investigation there does seem to be an important difference in the political sentiments being expressed here by the two Carolingian kings. As we have seen, the expression of rulership over a series of *regna* made by Charles the Bald had the deliberate aim of amplifying an imperial style of kingship and which overall can be seen as one stage in an incremental development process that had begun as early as the late 840s and which culminated with the imperial coronation at Rome in December 875. In contrast, such imperial ideas do not seem to have been encouraged at the court of Charles the Simple following his acquisition of a second *regnum* in 911. On the other hand, and as the addition to the date-formula of that year shows, it seems that there was an increased emphasis on the part of the court that the king's rule represented both a renewal and reaffirmation of the explicit Carolingian and Frankish components of the monarchy. For Charles the Simple, his acquisition of the *regnum Hlotharii* was not important because it permitted the trumpeting of imperial-style rule over multiple kingdoms but rather because it allowed the ideologues of his court to formulate particular ideas of the return of the royal landscape to a singularly Carolingian *regnum Francorum*.

These ideas evidently found their gestation in the period immediately following the death of King Odo, in the aftermath of which we see the appearance in Charles' diplomas of his claim of a renewed kingship. But it was as a consequence of the acquisition of the *regnum Lotharii* that this message achieved a new level of sophistication. The diplomas now began to incorporate into their *intitulatio* the elements *rex Francorum* and *vir illustris*, elements that were almost certainly designed in intimation of the formulae deployed by Charlemagne in the early years

of his reign.⁷⁴ Although the *vir illustris* component was soon dropped by the royal chancery, *rex Francorum* continued to remain in use throughout the latter stages of the reign.⁷⁵ It seems, then, that Charles the Simple responded to the acquisition of 911 by looking back beyond the political structures of the post-Verdun landscape to the apogee of Carolingian kingship in the early ninth century. Indeed, the monogram with which he now began to append his diplomas increasingly took on a form virtually indistinguishable from that used in the diplomas of his illustrious predecessor.⁷⁶ Charles the Simple's political ideology was one rooted deep in the Carolingian past of the late eighth century and unlike the uses made by his namesake grandfather, his own acquisition of the *regnum Lotharii* was used in an attempt to recreate the idea of a single *regnum Francorum* over which the king ruled. A reflection of this idea is seen in an example from Flodoard's *Annales* in which the author explicitly stated that the *regnum Lotharii* was *pars Franciae*.⁷⁷ Overall, the result from our perspective is that in his attempts to recreate the idea of a *regnum Francorum*, Charles in fact revealed his own acknowledgement of the *regnum Lotharii* in the political landscape of his day.

Despite the ideological responses made by the chancery of Charles the Simple to the acquisition of the *regnum Lotharii*, there remains the question of whether these ideological statements were encouraged by the need to meet the particularly regionalist demands of an élite over which the king found himself ruling in 911. In the case of Charles the Bald in 869 this was not a necessity and, in the end, his ideological responses can be seen purely as the taking of another opportunity

⁷⁴ Wolfram, 'Herrschartitel', 116.

⁷⁵ Wolfram, 'Herrschartitel', 119.

⁷⁶ Wolfram, 'Herrschartitel', 117.

⁷⁷ *Annales*, a. 919, 1.

in the advertisement of his imperial ambitions. In the case of Charles the Simple however there are signs that, despite his intentions for a rejuvenated *regnum Francorum*, and quite unlike the situation facing Charles the Bald in 869, there now existed two quite separate regnal communities of which the king had to take account and which, in the end, served only to undermine his greater political ambitions.

That there existed a regional community that the king had to acknowledge after 911 is suggested by some very interesting examples from within the body of royal diplomas. At the royal villa of Thionville in the summer of 913 Charles the Simple issued a diploma in which he affirmed the right of the people and clergy of Trier to elect their own archbishop.⁷⁸ Significantly, this diploma represents the restoration of Archbishop Ratbod (884-915) to the position of arch-chancellor, a role which he had held previously in the reign of Louis the Child, and to which his restoration now suggests the desire to provide a distinct chancery for the production of documents for the king's Lotharingian subjects.⁷⁹

The documents produced by this Trier chancery possess a number of stylistic features in clear imitation of the royal documents produced by the separate Lotharingian chancery of Louis the Child and Zwentibold. For example, the stylistic *Chrismon* which preceded the main text of the document issued by Charles the Simple at Thionville, was evidently based on those found in a series of Zwentibold's diplomas from the late ninth century.⁸⁰ Further on in the main body of the text is evidence of a return to the use of a style with clear Lotharingian antecedents. The

⁷⁸ *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 74.

⁷⁹ T. Schieffer, 'Die lothringische Kanzlei um 900', *DA*, xiv (1958), 16-148 at 139.

⁸⁰ Schieffer, 'Die lothringische Kanzlei', 139.

invocatio of the document read, ‘In nomine sanctae et individuae trinitatis et unice deitatis Karolus divina praeordinante providentia gloriosus rex’, and in its various components reveals the influence of the documents produced by the Trier-chancery of Louis the Child and their use on this occasion as a template.⁸¹ In the end, this period in the production of distinct Lotharingian documents remained short for, with the death of Ratbod in 915, his successor as both bishop and arch-chancellor, presided over an increasing trend towards amalgamation of west-Frankish and Lotharingian diploma styles.⁸² Despite this, the short period of time between 913 and 915 provides a glimpse of an administrative structure for the issuing of royal diplomas to a defined group and the production of those documents in a style that deliberately intimated a specific and distinct Lotharingian past.

The evidence is limited but does suggest that Charles the Simple did mobilise the great men of the *regnum Lotharii* as a coherent and active political community. It was at a general assembly held at the palace of Herstal in January 916, for example, that abbot Richer of Prüm was able to regain possession for his community of the dependant house of Süstern. The diploma produced on that occasion states that the restoration took place, ‘habito generali placito apud Haristallium, in conventu totius regni’, and then lists the *episcopi*, *comites* and *procures* who made up that assembly. The men who emerge as the participants were evidently considered as a distinct political group and, as far as they can be identified, it was their habitation

⁸¹ Schieffer, ‘Die lothringische Kanzlei’, 140 for the stylistic similarities in the *Arenga*, *Promulgatio*, *Corroboratio* and Seal of this diploma to earlier, Lotharingian documents; Wolfram, ‘Herrschartitel’, 120.

⁸² Schieffer, ‘Die lothringische Kanzlei’, 145.

in a particular region, the *regnum Lotharii*, which was being applied as the yardstick of membership.⁸³

The continuing use of space as a potential marker of identity is suggested in a diploma of September 920, again drawn up at the palace of Herstal, in which the king conceded the monasteries of Maroilles and Crespin to bishop Stephen of Cambrai. The common location of the properties concerned in the transaction, and those of the *comites* who interceded with the king on this occasion - Hagano, Rudolf of Cambrai, and Sigehard, each of whom attended the assembly of 916 – all suggest that when the document referred to the beneficiary as, 'vir quippe totius regni strenuus', it was to Lotharingia that reference was being made.⁸⁴ Such a situation is complemented by the picture painted in Flodoard's *Annales* of a contemporary and consistent distinction made between the *Franci* and the *Lotharienses* from across the river Meuse.

2.5: Conclusion.

The three examples of the varying uses of *regnum Lotharii* made by Charles the Bald, Louis the German and Charles the Simple, reveal the range of options available to Carolingian rulers in the construction of their chosen images of kingship.

⁸³ *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 84. The participants were, 'Rotgarius archiepiscopus (Trier), Herimannus archiepiscopus (Cologne), Dado episcopus (Verdun), Stephanus episcopus (Liège), Widricus comes palatii, Richuinus comes, Gislebertus, Matfridus, Berengarius comes, Theodericus comes, Reinherus comes, Erleboldus comes, Ruodolfus comes, Otto comes, Cunradus comes, Walcherus comes, Sigardus comes, Letardus comes, Fulbertus, Waltherius, Hagano, Eurwinus, Equinus, Witlegius, Hadeboldus, Widricus, Gerbernus, Odilbertus, Vulmarus, Farbertus, Euricydus, Ruotboldus, Lubertus, Wichingus'.

⁸⁴ *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 106. Cf., nr. 100, a judgement regarding the restoration of St-Servatius to the see of Trier, of which the judges in the case seem to have included the bishops of Noyon and Soissons.

All three kings did appeal to this tradition of royal rule but the nature of those appeals was conditioned by broader political ambitions.

This is most evident in the case of Charles the Bald. His chancery sought to create a particularly imperial style of kingship and chose to stress the composite nature of his kingdom as a means of portraying Charles as a king over several kingdoms. This was a image which had been cultivated as early as Charles' campaigns against his nephew Pippin II of Aquitaine in the 840s but it achieved maturity with the king's coronation as Lothar II's successor at Metz in 869. In the aftermath of the coronation, a particular and distinct Lotharingian date formula appeared in Charles' royal diplomas but again this says less about surviving political structures than it does about images of kingship because, as we have seen in this chapter, the western court applied and removed this formula in clear responses to political crises in the political landscape itself. It was an elastic political legacy and was exploited as such by the western court.

In comparison, Louis the German only briefly flirted with such political imagery and thus the need to stress the regnal components of his own lands paled in comparison to that undertaken by his brother. During the later ninth century then, the appearance of *regnum Lotharii* in the sources generally needs contextualising as part of this larger creativity and should not be interpreted simply as a sign of the continuing durability of the old kingdom of Lothar II as a structure of royal rule in the years after 869. As we have seen, this state of affairs had changed by the reign of Charles the Simple but his acknowledgement of the *regnum Lotharii* as a political unit serves to further illustrate its usefulness as a component in the construction of

images of rulership. For unlike his grandfather Charles the Bald, Charles the Simple's use of the *regnum Lotharii* was not designed to amplify imperial ambitions but rather as a means of promoting a return to an older style, unitary Frankish kingship. Essentially, the late ninth century provides a series of distorted images of the *regnum Lotharii* rather than evidence of any continuing political structure in the region.

Chapter 3

Failed Appeals to Lotharingian Identity: The Revolt of

Hugh and the claims of Rudolf I of Burgundy.

3.1: Introduction.

The last chapter argued that Carolingian kings appealed to the traditions of independent rule in the *regnum Lotharii* in their need to respond to a series of particular political circumstances. In particular, the elasticity of that tradition allowed Charles the Bald, Louis the German and Charles the Simple to each in their own way exploit the legacy of Lothar II's kingdom for the purposes of their own political expediency.¹ From such a perspective, the recurrence of *regnum Lotharii* in the source material of the late-ninth century does not reflect a cohesion born of its past as an independent kingdom, but rather reflects what its idea offered kings in meeting the challenges of the political present.

This is best seen in the actions of the western king Charles the Bald whose varying appeals to the traditions of the *regnum Lotharii* reflected his concerns to construct a visibly imperial style of kingship, the roots of which are found in the earliest years of the reign and which intensified following his attempts to gain the kingdom of Lothar II in late 869. As we saw, the pattern of the recurrence and disappearance of *regnum Lotharii* in his royal diplomas strongly suggests that the

¹ I am here using the useful definition of ideology provided by Patrick Amory as, 'articulated systems of thought about the ideal community, propagated by powerful individuals and institutions', in *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy, 489-554* (Cambridge, 1997), xiv which I consider to closely resemble the nature of the appeals in particular made by the western court to the traditions of the *regnum Lotharii*.

western court exercised a deliberate policy on just when to make those appeals to tradition and that it was governed by political expediency. Nevertheless, these messages were intended to have an audience and it was the date-place formulae of the royal diplomas that acted as one of the carriers of political ideology to the various regions of the kingdom.

This chapter will seek to further the investigation and enquire to what extent the legacy of the *regnum Lotharii* was met with a positive response from the aristocratic élites of the old kingdom. We will then ask whether these appeals encouraged the formation or reactivation of a particular political identity amongst the aristocracy of the old kingdom and, in doing so, we will show that this political legacy was not an attractive enough identity to bind together the regional élites. We will seek to gauge the effectiveness of this through two examples: the attempt of Lothar II's bastard son Hugh to gain his paternal kingdom and then the claim of Rudolf I of Burgundy to the kingdom in 888. First, however, we will return to the charters to see how far the appeals made in particular by Charles the Bald found a willing audience within the ranks of the aristocracy and whether or not a similar exploitation of this political legacy could take place below the level of the royal court.

3.2: The Private Charters.

If the traditions of the *regnum Lotharii* remained available for exploitation by Carolingian kings in the construction of their own particular images of kingship, there is little doubt that similar intentions also lay behind a number of claims made

by aristocrats in the years after 869. The royal diplomas acted as one of the media through which images of kingship were transmitted from the political centre to the localities, and the appearance of the terminology *regnum Lotharii* in private charters does suggest that the court had some success in maintaining this identity within the ranks of the aristocracy. In the foundation charter of the Benedictine monastery of Salles in the Lotharingian *pagus* of the Hennegau near Cambrai, for example, a certain Erlebold recounted how in late 887 he had brought the relics of his saintly patron Monegundis, 'ex Gallica regione...in regnum Lotharii'.² Something similar is also seen in the date-formula applied in another charter recording a precarial agreement contracted between the church of Cambrai and a certain Macharius in the final years of the reign of Charles the Bald.³ The charter was dated both to the king's reign from 840 and the years of his succession to Lothar II.⁴ Indeed, such is the close similarity here with the style of date-formulae applied in Charles' own diplomas that we must seriously consider the effect that royal chancery practice had upon the scribal practices of monastic *scriptoria* across the kingdom. The question to which

² *Actes et documents anciens intéressant la Belgique*, Hennegau, nr. 1 cited in Bauer, *Lotharingien*, 20, n. 24; for the monastery of Salles see A.-M. Helvétius, *Abbayes, Évêques et Laïques. Une politique du pouvoir en Hainaut au Moyen Âge (VII-XI Siècle)* (Brussels, 1994), 191; Dierkens, *Abbayes et chapitres*, 242-243. For the term Gallia see M. Luge, "Gallia" und "Francia" im Mittelalter. *Untersuchungen über den Zusammenhang zwischen geographischen-historischen Terminologie und politischen Denken um 6.-15. Jahrhundert* (Bonn, 1960); C.-R. Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich. Die Geburt Zweier Völker* (Cologne, 1990), 130-53.

³ For *precariae*, M. Parisse, 'Noblesse et monastères en Lotharingie du IX^e au XI^e siècle' in R. Kottje and H. Maurer, eds. *Monastische Reformen im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert* (Sigmaringen, 1989), 167-96, at 177ff; I. Wood, 'Teutsind, Witlaic and the History of Merovingian *precaria*', in W. Davies and P. Fouracre, eds. *Property and Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1995), 31-52, at 44ff; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 6-7.

⁴ This charter is transmitted only in the thirteenth-century *Gesta* of the bishops of Cambrai and this distance of time may account for the obvious error in dating the thirty-fifth year of the king's reign to 885, 'Actum Cameraco civitate altare sanctae Mariae, Idibus Aprilis anno dominicae incarnationis 885, indictione 7, et anno 35 regni domni nostri Karoli regis, et in successu Lotharii regis 5'. The formula would suggest a date of c.874-5 and this is supported by the charter's insertion into a section of the *Gesta* dealing with the episcopate of Bishop John, 866-879. (*Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*, L. Bethmann, *MGH SS*, VII (Hanover, 1846), 393-489, 421). See also, a Cluny charter dated to November 869 which carried the date formula, 'die mercuri mense novembri, anno I regnante domno nostro Karolo rege post nepoti suo Lotario regnante' and a charter of donation issued by the chorbishop of Constance in March 870 dated, 'nonas Kal. marci, anno I regnante domno

we will turn below is whether such instances reflected more than a simple local mimicking of royal chancery practice. Did they represent an increasing sense of identity-formation of the part of those individuals who inhabited the regions of the old *regnum Lotharii*?

Royal practice regarding the use of *regnum Lotharii* in the reign of Charles the Bald had always been conditioned by purely political circumstances, and we get no sense from the evidence that the king, through the messages contained in the date-formulae of his diplomas, sought to inculcate or strengthen an already existing political identity amongst the aristocracy of his newly acquired territories in the years after 870. Certainly, the continuing appeal to the traditions of independent rule seen in some of the earliest private charters issued in the wake of Lothar II's death can be explained as a means of safely navigating potentially uncomfortable political circumstances. Two Cluny charters demonstrate the point. The earliest of the charters recorded the sale of lands in western *pagus* of the *Cabilonensis* but was enacted at Bruailles in the Lyonnais and was dated, 'Die lunis proximo post kal. marcias ano primo quo Lotharius rex filius alio Lothario de ac vita transmigravit'.⁵ A second charter issued just a few weeks later was again witnessed by Count Gerard of Vienne. It carried the date-formula, 'Facta noticia die martis in mense apreli, anno primo co Lottarius rex obit'.⁶ It has been suggested that the appeals made here to Lothar's political legacy, particularly that in the second charter, represented a

nostro Karolo in regnum condam nepotis sui'. (*Cluny*, nr. 12, cited in Parisot, *Lorraine*, 394 and Chevalier, *Cartulaires dauphinois*, I, nr. 6, cited in Parisot, *Lorraine*, 394).

⁵ *Cluny*, nr. 14, cited in Parisot, *Lorraine*, 393. For Gerard's own charters see *Monumenta Vizeliacensia. Textes relatifs a l'histoire de l'abbaye de Vézelay*, ed. R. B. C. Huygens, *Corpus Christianorum*, vol. xlii (Brepols, 1976).

⁶ *Cluny*, I, nr. 15, cited in Parisot, *Lorraine*, 393.

declaration of independence on the part of the count of Vienne.⁷ This was a course of action that Gerard could have quite plausibly considered. The former count of Paris had deserted Charles the Bald for the Emperor Lothar I in 840 and was recorded by Nithard as having opposed his former master at the Seine in the following year.⁸ It was in the service of the Lotharingian royal dynasty that Gerard subsequently made his career. He was married to a sister of the Empress Engelberga and had served as the emperor's *comes palatii*.⁹ Following the division of Lothar I's kingdom in 855 Gerard acted as regent to the young king Charles of Provence where he had been active as count around Vienne since the early 840s.¹⁰ He was a man therefore whose whole career was effectively associated with service to the Lotharingian dynasty. Despite this however, Gerard seems to have made the transition to west-Frankish rule without too much trouble and was still in favour with Charles the Bald as late as July 870.¹¹ A more plausible explanation for the charters' language is provided by the continuing unpredictability even into the early months of 870 of which competing Carolingian king would finally succeed in establishing his authority in Provence. This region had formerly belonged to Charles, the epileptic youngest son of the emperor Lothar I, and had been divided on his death in 863 between his brothers Lothar II and the emperor Louis II of Italy.¹² Certainly, it was in Provence that the emperor, building upon those already established relationships,

⁷ Parisot, *Lorraine*, 393 and n. 6.

⁸ Nithard, *Historiarum Libri IV*, ed. P. Lauer, *Nithard, Histoire des Fils de Louis le Pieux* (Paris, 1926), Bk. I, c.6, 26 and Bk. II, c.3, 44.

⁹ *DLothar II*, nr. 23 confirming an earlier charter of Lothar I, *DLothar I*, nr. 68. For his other charter appearances see *ibid.*, nr. 126 and *DLothar II*, nrs. 18 and 21.

¹⁰ *Recueil des actes des rois de Provence (855-928)*, ed. R. Poupardin (Paris, 1920), nrs. 1, 5, 9. For Gerard see R. Poupardin, *Le Royaume de Provence sous les Carolingiens* (Paris, 1901), 10ff; R. Louis, *Girart, comte de Vienne, 819-877, et ses fondations monastiques* (Auxerre, 1946); E. Hlawitschka, *Die Anfänge des Hauses Habsburg-Lothringen: genealogische Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Lothringens und des Reiches im 9. 10. und 11. Jahrhundert* (Saarbrücken, 1969), 166-7.

¹¹ *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 342; Parisot, *Lorraine*, 393; Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 227.

¹² *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 863, 96; Ado of Vienne, *Chronicon*, 322- 3.

had the most realistic chance of successfully claiming a share of his brother's inheritance. Yet, Charles the Bald too was an attractive lord and by the summer of 870 the archbishops of Vienne and Lyon had evidently both, through their participation at the church council held at Attigny, declared for the western king.¹³ Until that time, however, the succession remained unresolved and open to all, and it is interesting here to note that the two Cluny charters were dated precisely during that period of initial and tense confrontation between Charles the Bald and Louis the German over the fate of the *regnum Lotharii*.¹⁴ When placed alongside the potential intervention of the emperor, this explains the language of the charter date-formulae. It was a necessary hedging of bets by the men on the ground owing to the unpredictability of just which king would finally succeed in establishing their authority in the region.

It is in this context of responding to varying political circumstance that we can also explain those other examples of ninth century private charters which appealed to the political legacy of Lothar II's kingship. Although now surviving only in the edition of the late twelfth-century cartulary of Gorze, three charters were drawn up at that monastery between 871 and 875 and each of these was dated to Charles the Bald's reign from 840 and his succession to Lothar II.¹⁵ The monastery

¹³ Parisot, *Lorraine*, 392.

¹⁴ Louis the German's first envoys arrived at Aachen threatening Charles with war in late January 870 and oaths were later exchanged before Easter (March 24th) agreeing to the division of the *regnum Lotharii*. (*Annales Bertiniani*, a. 870, 169).

¹⁵ The late twelfth-century Gorze cartulary (Metz BM MS 826) was destroyed in 1944 but was previously edited by A. d'Herbomez, *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Gorze, ms. 826 de la bibliothèque de Metz* (Mémoires et documents publiées par la société nationale des Antiquaires de France, Mettensia, 2; Paris, 1898) [hereafter, *Gorze*]. Although the charters survive only in this edition of the twelfth-century cartulary, John Nightingale concludes that the copyist, despite some mistakes, generally took care with his material. It is from this basis that I have proceeded to use the charter evidence, see Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 25-26. For the three charters see *Gorze*, nr. 65 (871), 'Actum Gorzie, in monasterio, publice, anno ab incarnatione Domini DCCCLXXI, indictione IIII, epacta XXVI, concurrente VII, anno II post obitum Lotharii regis'; nr. 66 (871), 'Actum Metis, publice, anno

of Gorze, however, had fallen into the share of the *regnum Lotharii* awarded to Louis the German at Meerssen in August 870.¹⁶ Why was it, then, that these charters displayed a style of dating-formulae which failed to acknowledge the rule of the king to whom Gorze had been awarded? Moreover, can we offer an explanation for why they continued to include the date-formula associated with Lothar's death?

As will become clear, that reason had nothing to do with any continuing or distinctive identity on the part either of the beneficiary or the monks of Gorze whose *scriptorium* was responsible for the composition of each of these three charters.¹⁷ Certainly, no other charter produced by that *scriptorium* carried this distinctive formula before the tenth century, and until which time the traditional style was to conform to a date according to the current reigning king.¹⁸ An answer is found in the particular mixture of political difficulties in which the community at Gorze found itself mired between the years 871 and 875.

As we have seen, by the terms of the treaty of Meerssen the monastery of Gorze had fallen into the hands of Louis the German. Yet Gorze, unlike some of the

quo supra'; and nr. 67 (29 October 875), 'Actum in atrio Sancti Laurentii, IIII Kalendas novembris, anno VI regnante Karolo rege, post decessum Lotharii iunioris, in Francia, anno ab incarnatione Domini DCCCLXXV indictione VIII, epacta XI, concurrente V'. The rubric *anno quo supra* which appears in charter nr. 66 is an addition of the copyist and although this causes some problems of interpretation, I see no reason to doubt that the copyist used this as shorthand precisely because the full date formula of this charter mirrored that found in the previous charter.

¹⁶ Gorze does not appear in the list of *honores* divided between Charles and Louis at Meerssen, see *MGH Capit. II*, nr. 251; *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 870, 172-4; but given its proximity of Metz, and the two royal gifts made to the monastery by Louis the German and Louis the Younger in 875 and 879 I see no reason to doubt its destination in 870, see *DLouis the German*, nr. 169 and *DLouis the Younger*, nr. 12. Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 44 notes that some of the monastery's lands did fall into the share awarded to the western king.

¹⁷ Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 27.

¹⁸ Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 27, for a useful synopsis of the Gorze charters. Of these, Gorze nrs. 74, 76, 80-83, 85-86, 89 are all dated to the regnal years of the reigning east Frankish king; nrs. 70-71, 78-79, 84 all contain the rubric *anno quo supra* but follow charters in the cartulary dated to east-Frankish regnal years; nr. 75 is dated simply to calendar years without any reference to the current reign.

other monastic communities of the region, did not immediately begin to enjoy Louis' favour and it was not until late 875 that the community received its first diploma from the king.¹⁹ This withholding of royal patronage was certainly connected with the lordship of Bishop Adventius of Metz.²⁰ In the aftermath of Lothar II's death Adventius had quickly emerged as Charles the Bald's most prominent supporter and, alongside Hincmar of Reims, played the leading role in the western king's coronation at Metz in September 869.²¹ One consequence of this was that once Louis had established his claim to a share of the *regnum Lotharii*, Adventius received no privileges from the king. Royal favour was not shown to the community until after the death of the bishop in August 875. It is clear, meanwhile, that despite now finding himself subject to the eastern king, Adventius continued to express his preference for Charles and we see him in attendance at the church council at Douzy in 871 where Hincmar of Laon, following one of too many acts of resistance to the king, was deposed from his episcopal office.²² The date-formulae contained in the three charters issued during the final years of Adventius' episcopacy are likely to represent, therefore, a demonstration of political affiliation on the part of the monastery's lord. Certainly, it is suggestive that following Adventius' death in 875 the formula ceased to be used in any further Gorze charter until the tenth century.²³

¹⁹ *DLouis the German*, nr. 169 which restored the villa of Moivrons to the abbey; *Gorze*, nr. 68; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 37.

²⁰ E. Boshof, 'Kloster und Bischof in Lotharingen', in Kottje and Maurer, eds. *Monastische Reformen*, 197-245 at 205.

²¹ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 156-7; Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 869, 157. On Adventius see Boshof, 'Kloster', 197-245, at 203-206; O. G. Oexle, 'Die Karolinger und die Stadt des heiligen Arnulf', *FrMSt*, I (1967), 250-364, at 351-359. R. McKitterick, 'The Palace School of Charles the Bald', in *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, eds. Gibson and Nelson, 326-339, at 336 suggests that Adventius' prominence at Metz is mirrored in his probable depiction as one of the two bishops alongside the Frankish prince on the Sacramentary of Metz.

²² Oexle, 'Die Karolinger', 359; Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 229 and n.32 for material relating to the Douzy council; also see, P. McKeon, *Hincmar of Laon and Carolingian Politics* (Chicago and London, 1978), 124-5.

²³ *Gorze*, nr. 67 issued on 29 October 875. Adventius died on August 31 and it was not until November that Louis arrived at Metz to issue his charter of restoration of Moivrons to the community.

In its way Adventius' appeal in the Gorze charters to the traditions of independent rule in the *regnum Lotharii* was a minor declaration of opposition to the king, Louis the German. The mimicking of western chancery style on the part of the Gorze *scriptorium* should not be read as a reflection of a continuing and distinctive identity on the part of the former men of Lothar II, but rather as a deliberate political statement made by its episcopal lord, Adventius of Metz. In all likelihood a similar explanation lies behind the date-formula applied in one Echternach charter from the period of the abbacy of Carlomann, the son of Charles the Bald, who ruled the abbey between the years 873 and 876.²⁴

Although the charter, which recorded an exchange of lands made between the abbot and a certain Adalwin, was dated erroneously to the eighth year of the reign of Lothar II, it is clear from the *Catalogus abbatum Epternacensium* that the document was actually drawn up in the eighth year following the death of that king.²⁵ Thomas Bauer certainly saw in this charter a reflection of what he considered to have been a political identity distinct from that of belonging to the eastern kingdom.²⁶ But the likelihood that this charter was drawn up in the wake of Louis the German's death on August 28th 876, as its editor Wampach himself thought, and the subsequent attempts of Charles the Bald to wrest territory from the grasp of his brother's sons, actually suggests a much more plausible explanation for the appearance of the date-

²⁴ C. Wampach, *Geschichte der Grundherrschaft Echternach im Frühmittelalter*, i/2 (*Quellenbuch*) (Luxembourg, 1930), nr. 152; K. F. Werner, 'Die Nachkommen Karls des Großen bis um das Jahr 1000 (1.-8. Generation)' in N. Braufels and P. E. Schramm, eds. *Karl der Große. Lebenswerk und Nachleben*, 4 vols (Düsseldorf, 1967), I, 403-482, at 453, n. 36. For Echternach generally see I. Heidrich, 'Die kirchlichen Stiftungen der frühen Karolinger', in R. Schieffer, ed. *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Regnum Francorum* (Sigmaringen, 1990), 131-147, at 141-142.

²⁵ *Catalogi abbatum Epternacensium*, i and ii, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH SS*, XIII (Hanover, 1881), 737-42 and L. Weiland, *MGH SS*, XXIII (Hanover, 1874), 30-8, 'Invenimus etiam cartam, quae anno 8. post obitum Lotharii regis, qui est annus incarnationis Domini 877, indictione 10., suis temporibus facta est, in qua continetur, Carlomannum nomen habuisse abbatis'.

²⁶ Bauer, *Lotharingien*, 21.

formula at this time.²⁷ The Mainz annalist thought that Charles' plans in the aftermath of his brother's death were to acquire that share of the *regnum Lotharii* which he had lost to Louis at Meerssen.²⁸ Certainly, the focus of Charles' plans was to confront his nephew Louis the Younger in the Rhineland, and it was at Deutz near Cologne and at Andernach that the two kings confronted one another.²⁹ It was Echternach's proximity to this centre of confrontation which explains the curious use of the date-formula in the charter produced in late 876.³⁰ With the death of Louis the German and the subsequent push towards the Rhine by Charles the Bald, Echternach fell into that region whose ultimate allegiance was now up for grabs, but which for the monastic community probably meant the uncomfortable experience of having two royal competitors close at hand. In such a situation the use of the date-formula represented an attempt on the part of the community to navigate a moment of political crisis without having to choose between Charles and Louis the Younger and, as we saw with Adventius of Metz, of running the danger of forfeiting future royal patronage.

Echternach, of course, was not the only monastery in late 876 that faced such dangers and we must acknowledge that, as far as we can tell, no such reaction occurred at places like Prüm or Stavelot. Yet, the stakes at Echternach were very much higher and it was likely the very person of its abbot which further complicated the situation for the community. Abbot Carlomann was the son of Charles the Bald and had been blinded for his acts of revolt against his father in the early 870s before

²⁷ *Echternach*, 230.

²⁸ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 876, 86-7.

²⁹ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 876, 196.

³⁰ This is seen in map 2. The principal routes open to Charles the Bald for *either* his thrust towards Mainz, Worms and Speyer, *or* for the journey towards Aachen and Cologne would have taken him close by Echternach.

being given refuge at the court of Louis the German in 873.³¹ He was perhaps then more attuned to the dangers of backing the loser in such situations, and the use of the date-formula would have allowed him, and his monastery, to safely navigate the course of the crisis without such danger. By utilising the memory of Lothar II's kingship, Carlomann continued to respect royal authority but without the finality which would have evidently accompanied having to choose between his father and Louis the Younger.

It has been argued in this section that in the final decades of the ninth century any appeals to the legacy of independent rule in the *regnum Lotharii* made in the private charters tended to reflect a need to present a particular political message on the part of those who issued the charter. We saw how in the final years of Adventius' rule at Gorze his continuing support for Charles the Bald was reflected in the use of the double date-formula – a mimicking of contemporary western chancery practice – by the *scriptorium* of the monastery. We saw, too, how at Echternach soon after it was the pressing need to navigate a dangerous period of conflict within the royal dynasty that saw the Carolingian prince and abbot Carlomann deploy the date-formula as a means of avoiding any final declaration of support for either of the two royal competitors. This impression is confirmed by the fact that examples such as these remain quite untypical in the body of surviving private charters from the late ninth century, the majority of which contain date-formulae corresponding, as we would expect, to the reigning years of the current king.³² It was not until the tenth

³¹ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 873, 184.

³² *Echternach*, nr. 153-158; *Chronique et chartes de l'abbaye de Saint-Mihiel*, ed. A. Lesort (Paris, 1909-12), [hereafter, *St-Mihiel*], nr. 16-17, 19; *Die älteren Urkunden des Klosters S. Vanne Verdun*, ed. H. Bloch, *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für lothringische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*, x (1898), [hereafter, *Verdun*], nr. 6; H. Beyer, *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der jetzt die preussischen Regierungsbezirke Coblenz und Trier bildenden mittelrheinischen Territorien*, 3 vols (Koblenz, 1860-

century that it became more common for the private charters to acknowledge the separate political identity of Lotharingia. Gorze charters produced after Charles the Simple's acquisition of the region in 911, for example, were clearly dated to that year and did not acknowledge the full span of the king's reign from 893.³³ Similar processes are seen in other private charters produced in the first decades of the tenth century. Although now without its seal, an original charter recording a precarial agreement made in 924 between archbishop Roger of Trier and a certain Liutfrid was clearly dated to the length of King Henry's reign in Lotharingia rather than to the full span of his rule from 919, 'Anno vero domni Heinrici gloriosissimi regis II' and this conforms nicely with the picture which we have already seen in Flodoard's *Annales* of an emerging Lotharingian aristocracy.³⁴ That, however, was a development of the early tenth century and we will turn to it in due course.³⁵ In the late ninth century, however, recourse to the traditions of the independent rule of the *regnum Lotharii* were quite exceptional. This was because Lothar's political legacy was too weak to act as a potential anchor of political identity for the region's political élites. We shall pursue this by investigating two appeals made to the regional aristocracy by royal

74), I, [hereafter, *UBMR*], nrs. 118-120; *Recueil des chartes de l'abbaye de Stavelot-Malmedy*, ed. J. Halkin and C. G. Roland (Brussels, 1909), [hereafter, *Stavelot*], nr. 40; A. Brückner, *Regesta Alsatie aevi Merovingici et Karolini, 496-919* (Strasbourg, 1949), [hereafter, *Alsatie*], nr. 589; and see n.14 above for other Gorze charters.

³³ Gorze, nr. 89, 'Actum in Scarponna, in mallo publice...anno I regnante Karolo rege, filio regis Lodovici' (912); nr. 90, 'Actum in Virduno, in mallo publico, coram Ricoino comite...anno III regnante domno Karolo rege in regno Lotarii quondam regis feliciter...VIII' (914); nr. 91, 'anno XI Karoli regis' (922); and nr. 92, 'Actum Mettis, publice, sub die...regni autem gloriosissimi regis Henrici in regno Lothariorum VIII (933). This last charter was an episcopal charter of Metz and unlike the previous charters was not a product of the Gorze scriptorium.

³⁴ C. Wampach, *Urkunden- und Quellenbuch zur Geschichte der altluxemburgischen Territorien bis zur burgundischen Zeit*, I (Luxembourg, 1935), [hereafter, *LUB*], nr. 164. See also, nr. 163, 'anno vero domni Karoli gloriosi regis XII in regno quondam Hlotarii' (923); and nr. 169, 'anno vero V. domni Henrici serenissimi regis super regnum quondam Lotharii' (928) and nr. 171, 173, and which were transmitted in the so-called *Balduineo*, a collection of Trier documents collated on the order of Archbishop Baldwin of Trier in the fourteenth century. *St-Mihiel*, nr. 24 recorded an exchange made in 918/19 between Bishop Dado of Verdun and Uncrin of St-Mihiel and was dated, 'Actum ad Castellum sub die VIII.Kal. octobris, anno VIII regnante Karolo rege in regno Lotharii'. We should note that the St-Mihiel charter did not survive as an original.

³⁵ See below, chapter 5.

claimants in the late ninth century: the claims of the bastard son of Lothar II, Hugh, to his paternal kingdom, and the attempts of Rudolf of Burgundy to resurrect the *regnum Lotharii* following the splintering of the *regnum Francorum* in the wake of the death of the emperor Charles the Fat. Both examples will show that the political traditions of the past kingdom were of an insufficient strength to draw enough support for both Hugh and Rudolf to realise their royal ambitions in Lotharingia.

3.3: The Revolt of Hugh of Lotharingia, 879-885.

The surviving charters show that both kings and individuals could deploy the traditions of independent rule in the *regnum Lotharii*. It has been suggested above, moreover, that these instances of appeal represented response to specific political circumstances faced by those who issued the charters. They should not be seen as expressions of any continuing sense of distinctiveness on the part of the inhabitants of the old middle kingdom. The absence of such an identity can be pursued through an examination of the failure of two claimants to this tradition of Lotharingian rule in the late ninth century, king Rudolf I of Burgundy, one of the *reguli* who appeared in the wake of the emperor Charles the Fat's death in 887 and, firstly, Hugh, the illegitimate son of Lothar II.³⁶

Hugh was the only son of the four children produced from the king's union with Waldrada and the name given to him by Lothar II came most likely from the stock of the king's own maternal family, that of count Hugh of Tours. Although

³⁶ In this section I use 'illegitimate' to refer to the contemporary awareness of differing categories of status at birth and which were acknowledged through the names given to full royal sons and lesser royal sons. Illegitimacy here follows a different set of assumptions and is not necessarily one based

distinguished the name was not one of the great royal monikers which marked out its bearer as one destined for future kingly rank.³⁷ Nevertheless, Hugh's name probably says more about the ill-defined status of Waldrada at the time of her son's birth in c. 855, than it does about the range of possibilities open to him in the years to come.³⁸ For illegitimacy, or rather the lack of full royal status at birth, did not necessarily form a preventative barrier to future political success. Arnulf, the future king of the east Franks and emperor, was born to the noblewoman Liutswinde, yet this did not prevent his father, king Carloman of Bavaria and Italy, from promoting his son both to a series of positions of authority, and a probable royal succession; even full-royal status, as we saw with Charles the Bald's son Carloman, did not in the end guarantee a kingdom.³⁹

Even if Arnulf's designation in one Regensburg charter as 'filius regalis' remains a somewhat exceptional acknowledgement of his perceived regality in the reign of his father, the status of being the son of the king continued to mark out the persons of all illegitimate male offspring as being special. Despite the status of their birth they remained members of the royal family, the *stirps regia*.⁴⁰ Indeed, it is striking that even during the tumultuous final years of Hugh's career, when his

on distinctions between *Friedelehe* and canonical marriage. (S. R. Airle, 'Private Bodies and the Body Politic in the Divorce Case of Lothar II', *P&P*, clxi (1998), 3-38, at 14-15).

³⁷ See the family tree in Werner, 'Die Nachkommen'; K. Schmid, 'Ein karolingischer Königseintrag im Gedenkbuch von Remiremont', *FrMSt*, ii (1968), 96-134, at 103-4; Airle, 'Private Bodies and the Body Politic', 17-18; R. Le Jan, *Famille et pouvoir dans le monde franc (vii^e-x^e siècle)* (Paris, 1995), 200-9, 283.

³⁸ Airle, 'Private Bodies and the Body Politic', 8-20.

³⁹ For the status of Liutswinde: Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 880, 116, 'ex quadam nobili femina'; and *Continuatio*, 330 for his description of her as 'nobilissima femina'. For general comments see, J. Fried, *Der Weg in die Geschichte: Die Ursprünge Deutschlands bis 1024* (Berlin, 1994), 429-42; Airle, 'Private Bodies and the Body Politic', 18; id. 'The Nearly Men', 32; A. Scharer, 'Alfred the Great and Arnulf of Carinthia: a comparison', in *Alfred the Great. Papers from the Eleventh-Centenary Conferences*, ed. T. Reuter (Aldershot, 2003), 311-321 at 315; MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 134-5. For Carloman see above chapter 2 with references.

⁴⁰ *Die Traditionen des Hochstifts Regensburg und des Klosters St. Emmeram*, ed. J. Widemann (Munich, 1943), nr. 86, cited in MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 134.

agitation towards gaining his paternal crown reached its apogee, and accusations of tyranny were subsequently levelled against him by contemporaries, those sources continued to acknowledge his status as the son of a king. They may have continued to point out that he was the son of Waldrada, but the explicit stress was not that he was born *ex concubina* but rather that he was a 'filius regis'.⁴¹ It was presumably in this guise that he continued to appear to his contemporaries.

We ought to acknowledge a general ambiguity in the position of illegitimate royal sons who, although put at a clear disadvantage in any pursuit of a royal title through the circumstances of their birth, remained potentially attractive lords if possessed of suitably worthwhile qualities.⁴² Such, at least, is the impression provided in 881 by the monk Notker of St-Gall who saw in Arnulf, despite the illegitimacy of his birth, the great hope of the fast fading east-Frankish dynasty of Louis the German, 'ex nobilissima quidem femina sed non legaliter sibi desponsata conceptum, qui adhuc vivit, et O! utinam vivat, ne extinguatur lucerna magni Ludovici de domo Domini!'.⁴³ For all the illegitimacy of their birth, figures like

⁴¹ So, for example, Hincmar's description of Hugh's status in 879 which follows the notice of Boson's coronation at Maintaille, 'Hugo etiam, filius iunioris Hlotharii ex Vvaldrada, collecta predonum multitudine, regnum patris sui molitus invadere' (*Annales Bertiniani*, a. 879, 239) and the St-Vaast annalist's notice of Hugh's military efforts against the Vikings in the same year, 'Post haec Scaldum fluvium intrans et omnem Brabantiorum terram incendio et ferro delent. Contra quos Hugo filius Hlotharii regis arma sumens inconsulte non mediocrem eis intulit audaciam' (*Annales Vedastini*, a. 879, 45). Other examples: *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 878, 880, 882, at 136-7, 228, 242 and 248; *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 879, 881, 885, at 93, 96, 103 and 114; *Annales Vedastini*, a. 885, 57; Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 883, 120.

⁴² Airlie, 'Private Bodies and the Body Politic', 18.

⁴³ *Continuatio*, 330. Notker too had been encouraged by the martial qualities displayed by Hugh, the illegitimate son of Louis the Younger, 'Similiter Ludovicus rex Franciae habuit unum filium nomine Hug, bellissimum et bellicosissimum iuvenem, de concubina praecellentissimae generositatis...'. (*ibid*). See also, M. Innes, 'Memory, Orality and Literacy in an Early Medieval Society', *P&P*, clviii (1998), 3-36.

Hugh remained Carolingian, potent forces in the landscape which help to explain, as we shall see, the degree of support that his political ambitions managed to attract.⁴⁴

Certainly, it was the general ambiguity in the nature of Hugh's position that provided Lothar II with an opportunity in the 860s to attempt the establishment of his son's claims to the kingdom upon his death. It was presumably in an effort to reinforce Hugh's regal credentials that Lothar permitted his young son's attendance at the gathering of Carolingian kings at Remiremont in 861, and which we see commemorated in an entry contained in that monastery's memorial book.⁴⁵ This suggestion of regality is much more apparent in a diploma issued by the king to the monastery of St-Peter near Lyon in May 863. By this document, which was evidently issued following the division of the kingdom of Provence between Lothar and his brother the emperor Louis II of Italy, the king conceded to the nuns of St-Peter the *cella* of St-Maximin and was concerned to provide for the spiritual welfare of both his parents and his brothers, the emperor Louis and Charles, the recently deceased king of Provence, '...ob amorem dei et emolumentum animae genitoris nostri ac genetricis nec non et dilecti fratris nostri Hludouici imperatoris, fratris etiam nostri Karoli quondam piissimi regis, cuius ibidem corpus sepulturae traditum est...'.⁴⁶ Each branch of the Lotharingian dynasty was represented in the text and the document itself was issued for the very monastery which housed the tomb of the erstwhile king of Provence. Yet, for our purposes it is significant that it was at

⁴⁴ For contemporary awareness about manipulating such categories see Airlie, 'The Nearly Men', esp. 30-35, and the comments at 34, '...while contemporaries believed in categories of ancestry and blood they were not prisoners of them; they knew that kinship could be artificial as well as natural; categories of ancestry and blood could be skilfully manipulated'.

⁴⁵ *Liber Memorialis von Remiremont*, ed. E. Hlawitschka, K. Schmid and G. Tellenbach, *MGH Libri Memoriales*, I (Dublin and Zurich, 1970), [hereafter, *Remiremont*], fo. 43^r, entry no. 1, 93.

⁴⁶ *DLothar II*, nr. 19; Charles had died on January 25. For the competition between Lothar II and Louis II over his kingdom see Ado of Vienne, *Chronicon*, 322-323. Lothar was evidently back at

precisely this moment of pregnant dynasticism that both Hugh and Waldrada were mentioned as equal spiritual beneficiaries in the text, ‘quatinus deinceps ad remunerationem prefatorum piissimorum principum atque salvationem amantissimae coniugis nostrae Uualdradae et filii nostri Ugonis...’. The application here of the term *coniunx* to Waldrada shows that she was now being considered as Lothar’s wife, a result of the successful separation from Queen Theutberga which the king and his bishops had managed to engineer at an assembly held at Aachen in 862.⁴⁷ By explicitly connecting Waldrada and Hugh to both previous and current generations of the Lotharingian royal dynasty, the St-Peter document was making a quite obvious declaration: Lothar, his wife Waldrada and his son Hugh were the next stage in that dynastic progression.

Political pressures, not least the impact of archbishop Hincmar’s intervention in the debate over the king’s marriage to Queen Theutberga had forced a reconciliation between Lothar and the queen by 865.⁴⁸ Certainly, Lothar’s powerlessness in the face of such strong political currents would have been accompanied by a further change in the status of his young son and we may reasonably assume that with Theutberga’s return to prominence Hugh suffered a parallel demotion in his claims to the succession. Yet, for all that this represented an obvious setback in Lothar’s plans for Hugh, the king did not consider himself as having been defeated in the crucial matter of providing for his son. The practice of dispatching junior members of the royal family to various provinces and *regna* of the

Aachen by May 21st when he issued a charter concerning an exchange of lands made with the monastery of Prüm. (*DLothar II*, nr. 22).

⁴⁷ For a discussion of Lothar’s efforts throughout 862, Airlie, ‘Private Bodies and the Body Politic’, 20-26.

⁴⁸ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 865, 122; Airlie, ‘Private Bodies and the Body Politic’, 34.

kingdom had long constituted one of the means by which Carolingian kings could both more securely establish royal authority in regions beyond their traditional heartlands, and provide crucial experience in the art of rulership to the next generation of royal figures.⁴⁹ It was in this tradition that Hugh was awarded the duchy of Alsace by his father at an assembly held at Frankfurt in 867, and commended alongside Waldrada and the *regnum Lotharii* itself into the protection of Louis the German.⁵⁰ Even if Lothar was not guaranteed final success in his politicking in the issue of his marriage, it seems that he could still give his son a fighting chance of future success by establishing him in one of the constituent regions of the kingdom.

If, indeed, this was Lothar's intention, then the grant to Hugh of the duchy of Alsace made eminent political sense.⁵¹ Although the region seems already to have emerged with some coherence by the middle years of the seventh century, it was the more recent example of the *ducatus* created for Charles the Bald in 829 which offered the king the chance of endowing Hugh with a viable political inheritance.⁵² Alsace, moreover, was a region from where the king could reasonably expect a strong degree of natural support in favour of his young son. It was the home area of the Etichonids, the family from which the empress Ermingard, Lothar's own mother, was descended, and this family continued to retain a considerable presence there.⁵³

⁴⁹ For the varying zones of royal control in early medieval kingdom see E. Müller-Mertens, *Die Reichsstruktur im Spiegel der Herrschaftspraxis Ottos des Großen* (Berlin, 1980). For the practice of subkingship see now, B. Kasten, *Königssöhne und Königsherrschaft. Untersuchungen zur Teilhabe am Reich in der Merowinger- und Karolingerzeit* (Hanover, 1997).

⁵⁰ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 867, 137.

⁵¹ On Carolingian Alsace see Zotz, 'Das Elsass', 52ff; H. Büttner, *Geschichte des Elsaß. Politische Geschichte des Landes von der Landnahmezeit bis zum Tode Ottos III. und ausgewählte Beiträge zur Geschichte des Elsaß im Früh- und Hochmittelalter* (Sigmaringen, 1991), 106-146.

⁵² Büttner, *Geschichte*, 124; Zotz, 'Das Elsass', 50-54.

⁵³ Zotz, 'Das Elsass', 54; for the Etichonids see Vollmer, 'Die Etichonen', 137-84.

In part, this was an institutional presence. Ermingard had founded the female monastery of Erstein from lands provided by the emperor Lothar I on the occasion of their marriage, and it was at her foundation that she found her final resting place.⁵⁴ More important, however, was the continuing importance of the family in Alsatian politics, and this is certainly indicated by Hincmar in his record of how in 869 Charles the Bald deliberately targeted Hugh son of Liutfrid, a scion of the Etichonid clan, and Bernard in a lightning campaign at the close of that year: this Liutfrid was the brother of the empress Ermengard.⁵⁵ Lothar, then, could have reasonably expected his plans for Hugh to have succeeded in Alsace. His maternal family continued to possess a dominant position within the ranks of the regional aristocracy and their status was amplified through associations with such royal sites as the monastery of Erstein, where both living and dead members of the family resided. It was here too that Waldrada's own family interests were located.⁵⁶

Given the circumstances of Hugh's birth the likelihood of his succession to a royal title was at best tenuous during the reign of his father. Lothar's death in early August 869 seemed finally to have resolved the issue. Charles the Bald, who received the news while at his palace of Senlis, quickly undertook a campaign to establish himself as his nephew's successor and by it initiated the process which would lead to the division of Lothar's kingdom at Meerssen in the following year. Certainly, Lothar's hopes that Etichonid support in Alsace would maintain a political foothold for his son seem also to have evaporated at this time with Hugh, the son of

⁵⁴ Büttner, *Geschichte*, 130.

⁵⁵ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 168. The elder Bernard was the brother of Erchanger, the father of the future empress Richgard who was married to Charles the Fat in 862, and therefore represents another prominent family in this region of the kingdom, see Büttner, *Geschichte*, 128, 133-135 and n. 228a.

⁵⁶ Büttner, *Geschichte*, 132-4; Zotz, 'Das Elsass', 60 and n. 86.

Liutfrid, quickly acknowledging Charles the Bald in the final days of 869. That we hear nothing again of Hugh in the sources until 878 indicates something of the finality which the events of 869 evidently meant for Hugh's chances of a royal succession. Hugh's claims had little chance against two experienced and senior Carolingian kings.

Somewhat unexpectedly, however, Hugh reappeared in the sources in 878 and his emergence from obscurity at this point provides a general motif of the processes which would drive his career over the coming years. In the western kingdom the succession of Louis the Stammerer in October 877 was accompanied by instances of unrest over what seems to have been the distribution of *honores*, and it is clear from Hincmar's report of that year that Hugh also sought to exploit this confused political situation. Indeed, although the archbishop remained silent on the nature of Hugh's unrest, his actions evidently caused some concern at court. Hincmar indeed felt compelled to write to Hugh condemning his infidelity but also to promise the rewards of office if he returned to the service of the king.⁵⁷ But, these appeals had little effect, and on September 10th 878, the king had Pope John excommunicate Hugh at a synod at Troyes.⁵⁸ Hincmar's letters to Louis, Bishop Franco of Liège and Hugh himself do not suggest that Hugh was yet pursuing anything but an improvement in his general position; but his exploitation of the unrest surrounding Louis' succession does allow us to begin to contextualise a transformation in his ambitions from the pursuit of *honores* to the winning of his paternal kingdom.

⁵⁷ *Historia*, Bk. III, c. 19, 260; c. 23, 317; c. 26, 344.

⁵⁸ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 878, 228, which records that Immino, the brother of the *Markio* Bernard, was also excommunicated by the Pope, 'Et post excommunicationem Hugonis, Hlotharii filii, et Iminonis ac complicum eorum'. For Immino's seizure of Évreux earlier in the year see *ibid.*, 222.

If it was in connection with the unrest associated with the succession of Louis the Stammerer that Hugh emerged again into view, then it was with the death of this king after a reign of barely fifteen months that a further transformation occurred in Hugh's opportunities and ambitions. Certainly, a transformation is now detectable in archbishop Hincmar's assessment of Hugh's intentions. While no mention was made in his earlier letters of claims upon a kingdom, by 879 Hincmar was writing in his *Annales* that this now was precisely Hugh's goal, 'Hugo etiam, filius iunioris Hlotharii ex Uualdrada, collecta predonum multitudine, regnum patris sui molitus invadere'.⁵⁹ The change is explained by the succession crisis which emerged in the wake of king Louis' death. The king had intended for his eldest son Louis to succeed him and, to this end, had dispatched the regalia in the possession of Bishop Odo of Beauvais and a count Albuin.⁶⁰ Yet, in the wake of the king's death a powerful faction emerged under the leadership of Abbot Gauzlin of St-Denis and Count Conrad of Paris which, fearing exclusion from power under any political settlement brokered by the chamberlain Theuderic and Boso, offered their allegiance to the eastern king Louis the Younger.⁶¹ Given, as we have seen, the fluidity of Hugh's status over the years, and the disputes which were emerging in the summer of 879 in the matter of the succession to Louis the Stammerer, it is plausible that Lothar II's son now found the circumstances conducive to contemplate openly pursuing his claims to royalty. Yet, as is suggested by the progress of Hincmar's annal for 879, it is more likely that it took one more political development for his ambitions to fully

⁵⁹ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 879, 239. The *Annales Fuldenses* do not spell out explicitly that this was Hugh's intention but its stress on the tyranny of his actions in that year evidently confirms the changed nature of his ambitions to rule, 'Interea Hugo Hlotharii ex Waldrata filius tyrannidem in Gallia exercebat, contra quam rex quosdam fideles suos destinavit...' (*Annales Fuldenses*, a. 879, 93-4). Surprisingly, the *Annales Vedastini* record only Hugh's failed attempt in this year to defeat the Vikings in Brabant (*Annales Vedastini*, a. 879, 45).

⁶⁰ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 879, 234-5.

⁶¹ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 879, 234-9; K. F. Werner, 'Abt Gauzlin und die westfränkische Reichsteilung von Amiens (880)', *DA*, xxxv (1979), 395-462.

emerge into the open and that this was the coronation ceremony of Boso at Maintaille and then Vienne.⁶² In short, the coronation of Boso transformed the political landscape and the possibilities available to Hugh. His royal pedigree certainly paled in comparison with such fully-fledged royal figures as Charles the Bald, and even Louis the Stammerer.⁶³ Yet Boso was not one even of the *stirps regia*. Hugh, however, as the contemporary sources never failed to forget, was a *filius regis*.⁶⁴

Boso's attempts to transform his status would ultimately end in failure but his challenge had fundamentally undermined Carolingian claims to royal exclusivity, and one consequence of this for Hugh was that it opened up the very serious possibility of a real advancement in his own status.⁶⁵ This was a tendency moreover which was to intensify during the remaining years of his career. The years 879-884 are characterised by the rapidity by which the stock of legitimate male Carolingians was depleted across the *regnum Francorum*: Louis the Stammerer (†879); Carloman of Bavaria (†880); Louis the Younger (†882); Louis III (†882) and Carloman II (†884). The greatest consequence of these deaths was the stark realisation that it was likely to be an illegitimate scion of the *stirps regia* who would succeed on the death of the emperor Charles the Fat and other than Hugh there remained only Arnulf of

⁶² *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 879, 239 which records Boso's coronation before immediately noting Hugh's ambitions. For a full discussion of Boso's career see Airlie, 'Political Behaviour', chapter 5; more accessible is, id. 'Nearly Men', 32-36.

⁶³ For the question of the open succession to Charles the Bald see Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 250.

⁶⁴ Although for Charles the Bald's attempts to bind Boso intimately with his dynasty see Airlie, 'Nearly Men', 32-4.

⁶⁵ For the Carolingian response to Boso's challenge see most recently, S. MacLean, 'The Carolingian Response to the Revolt of Boso, 879-87', *EME*, x (2001), 21-48.

Carinthia, the son of Carloman of Bavaria, and Bernard, the son of the emperor himself.⁶⁶

It is not surprising, then, that the contours of Hugh's career become much clearer at precisely this moment in the source material. In 880 the threat which he posed was considered sufficient enough for Louis the Younger to dispatch troops under no less a figure than the *dux* Henry and count Adalhard of Metz.⁶⁷ This Adalhard was the son of the ex-seneschal whose career had unfolded for the most part in the 840s and 850s in the middle kingdom. We might therefore have expected members of the family to react positively to any appeals made to the legacy of Lothar II. Yet, Adalhard did not support Hugh. Although Hugh himself was absent from the battle against the royal forces, the decisive defeat inflicted by the royal army was enough to force a reconciliation with the king in the following year and to gain from Louis, as a reward for this display of fidelity, a series of abbacies and counties.⁶⁸ This act of royal leniency and generosity, however, did not sate Hugh's ambitions for a royal title and so in the same year of his reconciliation he once again broke with the king and as a result was pursued into Burgundy by another royal army.⁶⁹

When concerned about questions of legitimacy and structures of authority,

⁶⁶ For a full discussion of this theme, S. MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, chapter 5. We should note, however, that one legitimate Carolingian did remain. Charles the Simple, the posthumous son of Louis the Stammerer was born in September 879. Given his very young age and the intense Viking activity during this period, Charles was not a credible candidate and had already been passed over in the division of the western kingdom made in 884 and would be again in 888 (*Historia*, Bk. IV, c. 2). He would not activate his claims until 893.

⁶⁷ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 880, 95. Cf. Hincmar's record that the campaign was led by Louis III and Carloman II, 'cum scara Hludouuici Germaniae regis' (*Annales Bertiniani*, a. 880, 242).

⁶⁸ For the battle: *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 880, 95; *Annales Bertiniani*, 242; *Annales Vedastini*, a. 880, 47. For the reconciliation: *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 881, 96. One of the monasteries awarded was Lobbes see *Annales Laubienses*, a. 880, 15, 'Hugo, filius Lotharii regis Lobiensis abbas efficitur'.

⁶⁹ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 881, 96.

the ruling Carolingians could act with impunity in the protection of their exclusivity. Louis the Pious' disregard for the claims of his nephew Bernard of Italy in the provisions of the *Ordinatio imperii*, for example, had led directly to the blinding and subsequent death of the young king in 818; while Charles the Bald, as we have seen, was severe in the punishment of his son Carloman whom he had stripped of his ecclesiastical rank and blinded in order to remove him definitively from any claim to a kingdom of his own. Such responses on the part of senior Carolingian ranks offers a useful barometer with which to gauge the progress of Hugh's career. For while both Bernard of Italy and Carloman were dealt with in a quite summary manner, one of the striking features of Hugh's career was his recurring ability to return to a state of fidelity. Thus, despite his demonstration of faithlessness in 881, Hugh was able to make amends with Charles the Fat in 882 and, much to the chagrin of the archbishop of Reims, to receive the revenues of the vacant church of Metz.⁷⁰ Predictably, Hugh did not long remain faithful and it seems that on this occasion the catalyst was the marriage of his sister Gisela to the Viking leader Godafrið in 883. This explicit connection was made by the Mainz continuation of the Annals of Fulda, and it was presumably the hope of significant military assistance from the Vikings that encouraged Hugh to make another claim for his paternal crown.⁷¹ Hugh's intervention in the following year alongside the archchancellor Liutward for the issue of a diploma to the imperial *fidelis* abbot Fulbert of St-Evre however, speaks of yet another return to royal favour.⁷²

⁷⁰ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 882, 248-9; G. Tellenbach, 'Die geistigen und politischen Grundlagen der karolingischen Thronfolge als historische Kraft', *FrMSt*, xiii (1979), 184-302, 286.

⁷¹ *Annales Fuldenses* (M), a. 883, 100; Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 882, 120; Tellenbach, 'Grundlagen', 287.

⁷² *DCharles the Fat*, nr. 94; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 122 for the identification of Fulbert as abbot of St-Evre and not, as the MGH editor thought, as abbot of St-Mansuy.

As we saw with Count Adalhard of Metz's participation in the royal army sent against Hugh in 880, the appeals made to the traditions of independent rule in the *regnum Lotharii* were not an attractive option to the local élites of the old kingdom nor were they a political structure to which the aristocracy necessarily desired a return. The most obvious sign of the local aristocracy's rejection of Hugh's appeals for a return to the independence of the *regnum Lotharii* was his need to turn to the Vikings for support in the final years of his career.

Such tactics were not uncommon amongst the ranks of ambitious Carolingians and here a useful comparison is found in the career of Pippin II of Aquitaine who, seeing the chance of succeeding to his father's royal title in that *regnum* wilt before the increasingly successful challenge of Charles the Bald, turned to the Vikings in support of his claims. An initial alliance had been formed in 857 when Pippin and a group of Danes based on the Loire attacked Poitiers and ravaged through the Loire valley.⁷³ Pippin returned to an alliance again in 864 and, in Hincmar's remarkable phrase, 'se Nortmannis coniungit et ritum eorum servat'.⁷⁴ Pippin was certainly not abandoning his faith in 864 but his willingness to accommodate the Vikings evidently reflects the lengths to which he was prepared to go in order to gain access to their valuable military resources.⁷⁵

This was because Pippin could not count on the loyalty of the Aquitainian aristocracy for whom the maintenance of an independent *regnum* to the south of the Loire was an increasingly less attractive option than the opportunities presented by

⁷³ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 857, 74.

⁷⁴ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 864, 105.

⁷⁵ Nelson, *Annals*, 111, n.3.

opting into a composite regnal structure dominated by Charles the Bald.⁷⁶ Pippin, in the end, was captured by the Aquitanians and, having been handed over to Charles, was condemned to death by the leading men of the kingdom and sent to the great fortress of Senlis where we hear nothing more of him.⁷⁷ Hugh's courting of the Vikings in the 880s mirrored the earlier attempts of Pippin II and, like him, Hugh was prepared to go to great lengths in order to gain their support. As we have seen, his sister Gisela was married to Godafrid in 883 but Hugh was also prepared to partition any future territorial gains with the Viking leader.⁷⁸ As is argued below, this was because Hugh's appeals to his father's political legacy did not find a willing audience within the ranks of the aristocracy.

Firstly, however, we shall return to those instances of repeated leniency shown to Hugh. One plausible explanation is that they reflected an acknowledgement on the part of the ruling Carolingians that Hugh did indeed possess genuine claims to a royal title. We should bear in mind that by 882 Charles the Fat remained the only legitimate Carolingian king ruling the lands east of the river Rhine, and that with the beginning in that year of the emperor's campaigns to demote Arnulf of Carinthia to a position of relative impotence, Hugh may well have been considered a potential candidate for inclusion in any succession arrangement. Certainly, this would explain Charles' continuing willingness to accommodate Hugh at least until 884, and would suggest that until then not all of the emperor's eggs

⁷⁶ For the shifts in support for Pippin amongst the Aquitanian aristocracy see, *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 848, 50; 855, 72; 857, 74; 859, 81; 864, 113.

⁷⁷ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 864, 113. For the charges made against him see *MGH Epist.* VIII, nr. 170, 163-5.

⁷⁸ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 885, 123.

were being put into Bernard's basket, a plan which seems only finally to have been decided upon in 885.⁷⁹

In any case, it is clear that Hugh's career, and his repeated claims to his paternal kingdom, complement the picture we have already uncovered of kings and individuals appealing to the traditions of the *regnum Lotharii*. For the most part the conclusion reached earlier was that such appeals were made in response to specific political circumstances and did not reflect the continuing existence of the *regnum* as a functioning political unit. As has been intimated, Hugh's career substantiates this conclusion. Put bluntly, Hugh's attempts met with complete failure. As we shall see, despite the vigour of his appeals to the legacy of his father, these actually met with little positive response from the inhabitants of his father's old kingdom. Hugh's offer of an alternative lordship was rooted in appeals to a return to an independent regnal structure but this was met with little enthusiasm from within the ranks of the local aristocracy and cannot be seen, ultimately, as an expression of any continuing sense, or wish, for political distinctiveness in the final decades of the ninth century.

The fullest commentary on Hugh's ambitions to regain his paternal kingdom, and the main source for the apparent support that he received, is provided in the Chronicle of Regino of Prüm. Regino composed his chronicle many years after the full story of Hugh's career had unfolded and, as we shall see below, this knowledge allowed the author to present Hugh's story in a deliberately critical fashion.

⁷⁹ For the campaigns against Arnulf see MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 134-44. Cf. too his view on the emperor's 'first attempt at a solution' to the succession question being, 'to put all his eggs into Bernard's basket' which differs slightly from my own. (*ibid.*, 130 and 143). For the attempt to legitimate Bernard see *ibid.*, 129-34 and 168-9.

In Hugh's first appearance in the text, he initiates his claims to his father's kingdom and quickly attracts to his cause, so Regino tells us, some of the *primores regni*,

Circa haec tempora Hugo filius Lotharii in spem recuperandi paterni regni ab aliquibus discordiarum ac litium sectatoribus introducit; omnesque, qui iusticiam et pacem execrabantur, ad eum confluxerunt, ita aut in paucis diebus innumera multitudo predonum eius dominationi se submiserit. Inter quos etiam nonnulli ex primoribus regni vana spe seducti manibus datis accedunt, videlicet Stephanus, Ruotbertus, Wicbertus, Thietbaldus comites, Albricus et frater eius Stephanus.⁸⁰

Regino's account is important because it provides the only virtually full roll-call of those who may have supported Hugh. Certainly, the rather more contemporary accounts of the Annals of St-Vaast, Hincmar and the Annals of Fulda provide nothing in comparison and between them record only the participation of Theutbald and the otherwise unknown, 'Abbas filius Adalardi' in Hugh's *socii*.⁸¹ It may be that, despite the distances of time, Regino simply remained a better informed commentator than the authors of the more contemporary source material, but it is apparent that the information contained in his extract is presented in such a way that

⁸⁰ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 883, 120-1.

⁸¹ Abbas: *Annales Vedastini*, a. 879, 45; Theutbald, *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 880, 242; *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 880, 95.

a clear picture emerges as to the author's intentions. After naming each of Hugh's supporters, Regino continues,

tantaque rapina et violentia ab his in regno fit, ut inter horum et Nortmannorum malitiam nil differret, preter quod a cedibus et incendiis abstinerent. Sic sic Deus omnipotens iratus regno Lotharii adversabatur et talibus incrementorum cladibus vires eiusdem regni radicitus exterminabat, ut prophetia sanctissimi Nicholai papae simul et maledictum, quod super eundem regnum protulerat, adimpleretur.⁸²

Much of the sentiment expressed here by Regino was a standard ideological Carolingian response to perceived threats to the established order. Hincmar, for example, responded to what he thought were Hugh's illegal designs on his paternal kingdom by characterising his supporters as nothing more than thieves and robbers, and as we saw above this was the language later deployed by Regino.⁸³ Similarly, the distinction between those possessing legitimate authority and those who sought to seize it was spelled out in the Annals of Fulda's account of the treatment meted out to those supporting Hugh in 879. The illegitimate basis of Hugh's claims were derided by the annalist as a case of tyranny, and Hugh's supporters, having been defeated near Verdun by *fideles* of Louis the Younger, were either killed, exiled or scalped.⁸⁴ It was Regino's intention to make just such a comment about Hugh and

⁸² Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 883, 121.

⁸³ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 879, 239, 'Hugo etiam, filius iunioris Hlotharii ex Uualdrada, collecta predonum multitudine, regnum patris sui est molitus invadere'; *Historia*, Bk. III, c. 26, 344.

⁸⁴ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 879, 93, 'Interea Hugo Hlotharii ex Uualdrata filius tyrannidem in Gallia exercebat'; and a. 880, 95, 'contra Hugonem in Gallia tyrannidem exercentem destinavit'.

his supporters. That support included *primores* but they remained robbers nonetheless who, rejecting peace and justice, were responsible for behaviour that distinguished them as being little better than the Northmen.⁸⁵

Hugh's supporters therefore appear in the Chronicle with a clearly defined role to play in the narrative. Despite their nobility, they remained all robbers and, just as those who were captured at Verdun paid the price for their crime by suffering mutilation or death, so too did those listed by Regino in his text. As we shall see, the meaning of his narrative is quite clear. Divine anger was turned upon the inhabitants of the kingdom.

The key phrase here is *vires regni*: the kingdom's strength. It is clear from other examples in the Chronicle that when Regino used this phrase, he was denoting the aristocracy as an élite group which he considered to be a marker of the relative strength of a *regnum*.⁸⁶ In his account of Louis the German's attempt to seize the kingdom of Charles the Bald in 858 for example, Regino was quite clear that when he recorded the fluctuating support of the *vires regni*, in which rested the fate of Charles' kingship, he meant the aristocracy. Having initially defected to Louis, it was only with their return to Charles that the king could resume his struggle against his brother,

Carolus, sentiens vires regni a se defecisse, in ultimis finibus

Aquitaniae fugae latibulum quaesivit...; nam principes, qui

⁸⁵ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 883, 121.

⁸⁶ This may have been quite a common perception. The author of the eleventh-century *Gesta Chuonradi imperatoris* also referred to the aristocracy as the '*vires et viscera regni*', see, Wipo, *Gesta*

eum [Louis] in regnum introduxerant, videntes, quod longe aliter incederet erga eos, quam existimaverant, penitudine tacti ad Carolum revertuntur. Carolus ex desperatis rebus vires se recipisse congaudens contractis undique copiis fratrem bello aggredi temptat.⁸⁷

Regino was concerned that the battle of Fontenoy had resulted in a crucial weakening of the *vires Francorum* and he revisited this theme in his account of the emperor Louis II's campaign against the Saracens in Italy in 866.⁸⁸ The emperor, according to the text, was aware of the limitations of his own position and sought out the assistance of his brother Lothar II in the hope that together their combined strength would meet the challenge of the innumerable Saracen host,

Contra quos Ludowicus imperator exercitum contrahit, et veritus, ne forte adversus innumerabilem hostium multitudinem vires regni non sufficerent, ad Lotharium fratrem in Gallias legatos missit, omnino exposcens, ut ad prefatae nequissimae gentis vires extenuandas audaciamque refrenandam sibi cum Deo auxilio, virtute quoque Francorum, opitularetur.⁸⁹

Chuonradi imperatoris, ed. H. Bresslau, *Wiponis Opera*, MGH SRG, LXI (Hanover and Leipzig, 1915 and reprinted 1977), 14.

⁸⁷ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 866, 90.

⁸⁸ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 841, 75, 'In qua pugna ita Francorum vires adtenuatae sunt ac famosa virtus infirmata, ut non modo ad amplificandos regni terminos, verum etiam nec ad proprias tuendas in posterum sufficerent'.

⁸⁹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 867, 93.

The most striking example, however, is Regino's picture of the slaughter at the battle of Andernach in 876 between Louis the Younger and Charles the Bald. There, according to the chronicler, Louis' victory was so complete that the forces of the western king, the *vires adversariorum*, lay dead across the landscape,

...confertissimae acies a Ludowici sociis irrumpuntur, et
sicut ignis in stipula immissus furit et in momento cuncta
devorat, ita vires adversariorum ferro conterunt, terrae
prosternunt.⁹⁰

It is clear, therefore, that when Regino employed this phrase in his narrative he was concerned with aristocratic communities. This has a significant meaning for our interpretation of Regino's list of Hugh's supporters. After naming each of Hugh's supporters, Regino continued that God was so angered by their behaviour that his anger was directed towards their *regnum* and that through a series of disasters utterly exterminated the *vires eiusdem regni*. Given Regino's use of *vires regni* elsewhere in his Chronicle, the strong implication of these comments, therefore, is that it was the *primores* who, as the custodians of the *vires* of the *regnum Lotharii*, were the victims of divine retribution. This scene, therefore, takes on something of a fictive element. Regino provides a picture in which Hugh's claims to the *paternum regnum* are met by a spontaneous positive response on the part of the aristocracy. Yet, his list of supporters is provided, surely, in order to deliver the denouement that they all suffered for their actions. These men were so named

⁹⁰ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 876, 112. For other examples, see. a. 871, 103 and a. 874, 107.

because they could be used by Regino to fit the demands of his narrative. Indeed, the logic of the argument forces us to ask whether they supported Hugh at all.

There is good circumstantial evidence that some of these men, at least, may have supported Hugh.⁹¹ Count Stephen, the first of those *primores* listed by Regino, and Wicbert, Hugh's *nutritor*, almost certainly had some prior association with one another. Both appear as witnesses to a charter, probably issued at the monastery of St-Vanne near Verdun, by which a Hildebert gave to the monastery lands at Bures. The charter was certainly not a statement of any secessionist tendencies on the part of those gathered for the transaction, and it was dated faithfully to the first year of the rule of Charles the Fat in his recently acquired northern kingdom, 'anno I. regnante domino nostro Karolo imperatore in regno germani sui Ludouici'.⁹² Yet, the closeness in the date of the issue of this charter, September 18th 882, to the events recorded by Regino for the year 883, and the reminder that it was in the environs of Verdun that some of Hugh's *homines* were caught and severely dealt with by *fideles* of Louis the Younger in 879, would plausibly suggest an association between Stephen and Wicbert.

Both the Annals of Fulda and Hincmar confirm the prominent position in Hugh's support awarded by Regino to Count Theutbald. As the son of Hubert, the one-time abbot of St-Maurice d'Agaune and the nephew, therefore, of Queen Theutberga, Theutbald's alliance with the son of Waldrada represents, indeed, a curious *rapprochement* designed in the interest of reviving the kingdom of Lothar

⁹¹ For Hugh's support see Parisot, *Lorraine*, 443-446.

⁹² *Verdun*, nr. 6; Parisot, *Lorraine*, 443, n. 5 and 444.

II.⁹³ Certainly, he married Hugh's sister Bertha. Theutbald's importance to Hugh is also suggested by an account in the *Annals of Fulda* which allocated to him the leadership of the rebel forces in 880 and the title *princeps militiae*.⁹⁴ It is rather more difficult, however, to uncover corroborative evidence of any association between Hugh and the remainder of his support as listed by Regino. Count Robert may have been the future lay abbot of Echternach, who succeeded Adalhard the Younger in around 890, and who was also the brother of Count Megingoz.⁹⁵ Given that there is a known association between Stephen and Megingoz to the extent that the former would avenge the murder of the latter in the 890s, this too may provide some grounds for the suggestion that a connection existed between Stephen and Megingoz's brother, Robert.⁹⁶ This man, however, was not the same Robert, as Parisot thought, who interceded with the emperor alongside Bishop Franco of Liège at Metz in 884 for Sanctio, the father of Gerard of Brogne.⁹⁷ On this occasion, that Robert was the count of Namur, brother of the powerful western count Odo, and described in the diploma issued to Sanctio as a 'most faithful count'.⁹⁸ As regards Alberich and his brother Stephen, little evidence survives, other than the testimony of Regino himself, of any association between them and Hugh.

This lack of additional supporting evidence does not mean, of course, that, at

⁹³ Nelson, *Annals*, 221, n. 6. For Hubert's career in the middle kingdom see *DLothar I*, nr. 96; *DLothar II*, nrs. 1 and 32; Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 859, 188 for his *ducatus*. For his earlier possession of Lobbes see Dierkens, *Abbayes*, 109.

⁹⁴ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 880, 95; Hincmar also records the prominent position of Theutbald, *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 880, 'Quo venientes, quia Hugonem non invenerunt, sororium illius Teutbaldum bello aggressi sunt, et multis interfectis, illum in fugam verterunt'.

⁹⁵ *Cat. abb. Ept. I*, 32, provides an abbacy from 890-897; *Cat. abb. Ept. II*, 33, provides an abbacy of just three years; Parisot, *Lorraine*, 445; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 182.

⁹⁶ *Remiremont*, 6v; Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 896, 144; G. Althoff, *Amicitiae und Pacta. Bündnis, Einung, Politik und Gebetsgedenken im beginnenden 10. Jahrhundert* (Hanover, 1992), 222.

⁹⁷ Parisot, *Lorraine*, 445.

⁹⁸ MacLean, *Politics and Kingship*, 108-109.

some point, these men could not all have offered their support to Hugh. But it does allow us, at least, to reconsider the nature of their cohesion as a group in the way that Regino clearly presents them in his text. Although we can connect some of these men to one another, the evidence remains at best circumstantial, and is less than convincing. Indeed, the difficulty with Regino's account is that he was clearly constructing this episode as a key scene in his narrative. Taking into consideration his concern with the idea of the *vires regni*, and the full list of *primores* provided in accompaniment, we need to consider seriously the proposition that they were listed precisely because they fulfilled Regino's conception of an extinguished *regnum*.

As we have seen, this was a theme that Regino deployed elsewhere in the Chronicle. Despite Lothar II's positive response to his brother's request for military assistance against the Saracens, for example, the subsequent distress of the Lotharingian army in Italy was presented as a case of divine retribution, 'non solum Lothario, verum etiam omni regno eius adversaretur'.⁹⁹ And, in his description of the events leading up to the death of the king at Piacenza, Regino noted that those men who had not falsely participated in Communion with Lothar barely managed to escape the penalty of death, 'vix mortis periculum evaserunt'.¹⁰⁰ It is significant, then, that, when we consider the list of *primores* who supported Hugh, and Regino's comments about the *vires regni*, these men appear in a new light. All these men, in fact, were very probably dead by the time that Regino came to write his Chronicle and the very fact of this, of course, gave substance to what the abbot had to say.

⁹⁹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 867, 94.

¹⁰⁰ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 869, 97.

We can almost be certain that all of the *primores* listed by Regino were dead by the time that the Chronicle was completed in around 906, and although he does not narrate each of their deaths, those that he does certainly conform to his picture of serial disaster in the *regnum Lotharii*.¹⁰¹ He tells how, for example, Alberich was killed by Stephen in revenge, it seems, for the murder of Megingoz in 892, and how later, in 901, Stephen himself fell victim to an assassination attempt in which a poisoned arrow was expertly shot through the window of his residence.¹⁰² A more memorable account is that provided of Wicbert's own death at the hands of Hugh himself, 'Hoc etiam tempore idem Hugo Wicbertum comitem, qui ab ineunte aetate sibi faverat, interfecit'.¹⁰³ As Regino pointed out, Wicbert had a long association with Hugh and the destruction of this bond, alongside a series of other killings instigated by the Carolingian amongst his followers, must have been intended, surely, to show a tyrant's perversion of those lordly attributes which were expected as the natural behaviour and provision of a legitimate ruler.¹⁰⁴ Regino does not record the deaths of each of these men, however, but they were certainly dead by the time of the Chronicle's completion. Theutbald, for example, retreated to Provence where, as count of Arles, he ended his career in 887, and where too, his son was established as count of Vienne by 903, and the dominant personality of that kingdom by 905.¹⁰⁵ Robert, following the testimony of the *Catalogi* of the abbots of Echternach, disappears from view, at the latest, in 897 and although his disappearance could be the result of a redistribution of *honores*, given the common

¹⁰¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 883, 121.

¹⁰² Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 896, 144; 901, 149.

¹⁰³ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 883, 121.

¹⁰⁴ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 883, 121.

¹⁰⁵ *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-André-le-Bas*, ed. Chevalier, n. 11, cited in Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance*, 137-8.

fate of the rest of the *primores* listed by Regino, we can confidently assume his death by 908. The *vires regni*, it seems, had indeed been extinguished.

It is clear, then, that the picture presented by Regino of Hugh's political ambitions to his *paternum regnum*, and the spontaneity of the native response to it, were designed to conform to the thematic demands of a narrative in which Regino sought to demonstrate the impact of divine judgement in human affairs. We saw in the introduction that in an earlier part of the Chronicle Regino recorded the curse placed upon the *regnum Lotharii*. Hugh's career unfolds as the next stage in this story of damnation upon the kingdom of Lothar II. In the end, of course, Hugh did possess political ambitions to a royal crown and he did possess a support base centred in the old *regnum Lotharii*. Yet, we ought to remind ourselves that not all the inhabitants of the old kingdom responded in a positive manner to his appeals. As we have seen, the royal response to Hugh's agitation in 880 was spearheaded by the Saxon *dux* Henry and the count of Metz, Adalhard. We will seek later to offer an explanation for this failure of a distinctive political identity to take root in the old kingdom. Firstly, however, we shall turn to king Rudolf I of Burgundy and his attempts to appeal to the traditions of independent rule in the *regnum Lotharii*.

3.4: The Appeals of Rudolf I of Burgundy.

The appeals made by Hugh to the traditions of independent rule in the *regnum Lotharii* were not the only ones to be made in the late ninth century. Early in the year 888 the *marchio* Rudolf, one of the closest political allies of the late emperor Charles the Fat, was proclaimed king at the monastery of St-Maurice d'Agaune, and

in doing so founded a Burgundian royal line which would survive into the mid eleventh century.¹⁰⁶ Like Hugh before him, King Rudolf also made an appeal to rule the *regnum Lotharii* and, just as with those earlier appeals, that made by the new king of Burgundy was a response to quite specific political circumstances rather than an expression of continuing Lotharingian political distinctiveness.

Rudolf's family, the Welfs, had long been first-rank imperial aristocrats.¹⁰⁷ His grandfather Conrad had held a number of *honores* in Alemannia during the first half of the ninth century and, through several propitious marriages conducted with the royal family, possessed links to each of the post-Verdun kingdoms.¹⁰⁸ It was these links that allowed various members of the Welfs to pursue political careers throughout the *regnum Francorum*. For example, while this Conrad remained focused on his *honores* in Alemannia, his brother Rudolf could seek out service in the western kingdom of Charles the Bald.¹⁰⁹ Similar dynamics are seen in the career of the elder Conrad's own sons. Although initially poached by Charles the Bald from Louis the German in 853, his sons Conrad and Hugh were rewarded with grants

¹⁰⁶ Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*, 338.

¹⁰⁷ For Rudolf see most recently, MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, *passim*. See too, R. Poupardin, *Le Royaume de Bourgogne (888-1038). Etude sur les origines du royaume d'Arles* (Paris, 1907), 1-10; *Die Urkunden der Burgundischen Rudolfinger*, ed. T. Schieffer (Münich, 1977), [hereafter, *DRudolf I*], *Einleitung*. For the family, G. Althoff, *Verwandte, Freunde und Getraue: zum politischen Stellenwert der Gruppenbindungen im frühen Mittelalter* (Darmstadt, 1990), 45-50, translated as *Family, Friends and Followers: Political and Social Bonds in medieval Europe*, translated by C. Carroll (Cambridge, 2004); B. Schneidmüller, *Die Welfen: Herrschaft und Erinnerung* (Stuttgart, Berlin, Cologne, 2000). On Burgundy see B. Bligny, 'Le Royaume de Bourgogne', *Karl der Große*, I, 247-268; C. B. Bouchard, 'Burgundy and Provence, 879-1032', *NCMH*, III, 328-345; G. Castelnovo, 'Les Élités des royaumes de Bourgogne', ed. R. Le Jan, *La Royauté et les Élités dans l'Europe Carolingienne (du début du IX^e au environs de 920)* (Lille, 1998), 383-408; and more generally, J. Fleckenstein, 'Über die Herkunft der Welfen und Ihre Anfänge in Süddeutschland', in Tellenbach, ed., *Studien und Vorarbeiten*, 71-136.

¹⁰⁸ Conrad's sisters Judith and Emma had married Louis the Pious and Louis the German while he had married Adelaide, the sister of Lothar I's empress Ermengard.

¹⁰⁹ Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 177.

of *honores* in the county of Auxerre where the first received the countship and the second the abbacy of St-Germain d'Auxerre.¹¹⁰

By the 860s, however, their interests had moved to the middle kingdom where Conrad's possession of the *honores* formerly belonging to Hubert, the brother of Lothar II's queen, was sealed when he killed his competitor in an engagement near Orbe sometime in 864.¹¹¹ This competition may have been more than the traditional rivalries born of a newcomer stepping upon the toes of more established regional figures. As we have seen, Conrad had held the county of Auxerre before seeking out new fortunes elsewhere and it is plausible that his rivalry with Hubert originated in the competition for power and influence around Auxerre and in particular for influence within the community at the monastery of St-Germain. We know that Hubert was well known at least to some of the community of St-Germain while Conrad's own father, Conrad, was well remembered at the monastery.¹¹² This suggestion of a longer standing competition between the two families at St-Maurice and St-Germain would certainly explain why Hugh, Conrad's brother and abbot of St-Germain, participated in the campaign in which Hubert was killed in 864.¹¹³ In the pursuit of *honores* by imperial aristocrats, the *regnum Francorum* had remained something of a frontierless world.¹¹⁴ By the last quarter of the century, however, such opportunities were increasingly a thing of the past. Certainly Rudolf, being one of only three men distinguished by the title *marchio* in the diplomas of Charles the

¹¹⁰ For Conrad's possession the county of Auxerre, *DCharles the Bald*, nrs. 248 and 261; Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 178.

¹¹¹ Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 179.

¹¹² Heiricus, *Ex miraculis s. Germani*, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH SS*, XIII (Hanover, 1881), 401-404, at 401, which described Conrad as 'princeps famosissimus...coniunx illi erat Adelheid nomine'; G. Tellenbach, 'Exkurs: Über die ältesten Welfen im West- und Ostfrankenreich', in his *Studien und Vorarbeiten*, 335-340.

¹¹³ *Annales Xantenses*, a. 864, 23; *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 864, 116.

¹¹⁴ Airlie, 'The Nearly Men', 38.

Fat, possessed something akin to imperial status.¹¹⁵ Yet, unlike his father, the foundations of his position were not empire-wide claims and associations but rather his dominance of one important region of the empire, Transjurane Burgundy.

Although various regions of the *regnum Francorum* had been designated as having belonged to the *regnum Burgundionum*, Transjurane Burgundy was a more-or-less specific territorial unit in the Carolingian regnal set-up.¹¹⁶ Somewhat like Alsace, this sense of definition was in part a product of geography: the hedging of the *civitates* of Lausanne, Sion and Geneva between the Jura mountains and the Alps made this a well enough defined entity for successive Carolingian kings to use as a political unit.¹¹⁷ Certainly, a *pagus Ultrajuranus* can be seen in the hands of successive *comites* as early as the seventh century, but it is difficult to see any realistic continuity between this period and the later ninth century.¹¹⁸

Rather, the unit which formed the heartland of Rudolf's kingdom in 888 seems to have been the product of much more recent political history. It was a 'ducatum inter Iurum et montem Iovis' which Lothar II had awarded to Hubert, the brother of queen Theutberga, as part of the redistribution of *honores* following his succession and marriage in 855-6.¹¹⁹ It was to this position that Rudolf's father Conrad, whom we see transferring his interests from the western kingdom in the early 860s, succeeded following his victory over Hubert at Orbe in 864.¹²⁰ Finally, it was here that Rudolf's own interests were centred following the death of his father in

¹¹⁵ MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 67.

¹¹⁶ Poupardin, *Bourgogne*, 2-4; Castelnovo, 'Les Élités', 383-387.

¹¹⁷ Poupardin, *Bourgogne*, 9.

¹¹⁸ Poupardin, *Bourgogne*, 5.

¹¹⁹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 859, 78.

¹²⁰ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 866, 91.

c.878.¹²¹ The foundation of their possession of the *ducatus* in the region was for each the monastery of St-Maurice d'Agaune. What we seem to have had in this region, therefore, was not some kind of complete territorial command but rather the possession of the major *honor* in what was a well defined geographical entity and which Carolingian kings subsequently acknowledged as the focal point of power structures in the area.¹²² The possession of the monastery by just three men since the early days of the reign of Lothar II provided a real sense, therefore, of the political identity of the region.¹²³ It was precisely the illegal possession of St-Maurice d'Agaune, for example, which Hincmar of Rheims highlighted as the main reason for Hubert's fall in 864 and even as early as 859, Lothar II was able to detach the entire region *en masse* from his kingdom and award it to his brother, Louis II of Italy, as part, likely, of the preliminary stages of his moves against Theutberga and her brother.¹²⁴ By 888, therefore, Rudolf was the leading aristocratic figure in what was a geographically and politically cohesive entity. The title of *marchio*, which was awarded to him by Charles the Fat, was essentially a recognition and stabilisation of those local power structures which stretched back into the early reign of Lothar II and which, now in the hands of Rudolf, had always effectively provided leadership of the local aristocracy.

Although it is very difficult to garner anything of the parameters of this aristocracy, it is clear that Rudolf sat at the head of a local aristocratic grouping centred on the core regions of Transjurane Burgundy around Lausanne, Sion and

¹²¹ MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 67.

¹²² MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 67-69.

¹²³ Zuffery, *Abtei*, 54-62. Hincmar recorded in his annals that Charles the Bald sought to endow Boso with St-Maurice in 869. The region however remained in the hands of the Emperor Louis II and thus Charles' plan remained unfulfilled (*Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 167).

¹²⁴ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 859, 82.

Geneva.¹²⁵ In February 885 we see his *fidelis* Vodelgis as the beneficiary of an imperial grant of properties in the Transjura designed, presumably, for the provisioning of the imperial court on its journey west for the acclamation of the emperor as the successor to Carloman II.¹²⁶ Later, in August of the same year, Rudolf issued a diploma in which he underwrote a grant of lands made by a Reginolf to the church of Lausanne.¹²⁷ The two transactions are important from our perspective because they help to reveal an aristocratic network centred on Rudolf. If, on the one hand, the beneficence of the grant to Vodelgis in 885 came from the imperial court in the first instance, the location of those properties in the pays de Vaud, on the other hand, shows how considerations of the *marchio*'s local prominence must have lain behind the decision to grant those properties to his *fidelis*.¹²⁸ For, it is also in the pays de Vaud that a *Turinbertus* appears as count in the early years of the tenth century. Even allowing for this late assumption of a comital title by Turinbertus, his appearance, significantly, as one of the witnesses to the *marchio*'s confirmation of the grant made by Reginolf to the church of Lausanne in August 885 leaves little doubt of the impression that Rudolf supervised the leading personalities of the Transjurane region.¹²⁹ One further identifiable count in Rudolf's service was Manasses, the count of Geneva.¹³⁰

This, then, was the basis from which Rudolf could proceed to orchestrate his transformation to royalty in 888. According to the Annals of Fulda, Rudolf simply

¹²⁵ For a discussion of this aristocratic community to which I am greatly indebted see MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 67-69 and 125-126.

¹²⁶ *DCharles the Fat*, n. 112; MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 126.

¹²⁷ *DRudolf I*, n. 2, 'donnus Rodulfus comes nec non etiam inclitus marchio'.

¹²⁸ *DCharles the Fat*, n. 112, 'cuidam vassallo Ruodulfi fidelis et dilecti marchionis nostri nomine Vodelgios quasdam res proprietatis in comitatu Waldense'.

¹²⁹ *DRudolf I*, n. 2, 'Arismundo, Turinberto, Ratsone, Itone, Folcrado, Ruodperto, Ameldrico, Leuprant'.

¹³⁰ MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 68.

began to rule in his new regal style, but Regino of Prüm reveals to us much of the transformative process through which the *marchio* was turned into a king.¹³¹ Coming with his coterie of supportive *primores* to the monastery of St-Maurice d'Agaune, Rudolf underwent a coronation and ordered that henceforth he was now a king, 'coronam sibi imposuit regemque se appellari iussit'.¹³² The coronation at St-Maurice had taken place in the early days of January 888 but by March it seems evident that Rudolf felt a second ritual was necessary and so, this time further north at Toul, the king was crowned by Bishop Arnald (871-893).¹³³ This second coronation has always been interpreted as an expression of the king's claims to the whole of the *regnum Lotharii*, and this seems in part to be corroborated by Regino's statement that in the aftermath of the coronation at St-Maurice, feelers were sent out on behalf of the king to the major secular and ecclesiastical magnates of the kingdom, 'Post haec mittit legatos per universum regnum Lotharii et suasionibus pollicitationibusque episcoporum ac nobilium virorum mentes in sui favorem demulcet'.¹³⁴

That a second coronation should have taken place in 888 is hardly exceptional nor, indeed, that in this world of political upheaval following the

¹³¹ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 888, 116.

¹³² Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 888, 130. On St-Maurice as a place of power see B. H. Rosenwein, 'One site, many meanings: Saint-Maurice d'Agaune as a place of power in the early Middle Ages', in M. de Jong, F. Theuws, C. van Rhijn, eds. *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2001), 271-290; R.-H. Bautier, 'Sacres et couronnements sous les Carolingiens et les premiers Capétiens. Recherches sur la genèse du sacre royal français', *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France* (1987), 3-56, at 47-8.

¹³³ For the date of the St-Maurice coronation see Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*, 375 and n. 132; for the Toul coronation, *Annales Vedastini*, a. 888, 64-5, 'Hi qui ultra Jurum atque circa Alpes consistunt, Tullo adunati, Hrodulfum nepotem Hugonis abbatis, per episcopum dictae civitatis benedici in regem petierunt, qui et ita egit'; and for the argument dating it to March see Dümmler, *Geschichte*, 315 and E. Hlawitschka, 'Kaiser Wido und das Westfrankenreich', *Person und Gemeinschaft im Mittelalter*, eds. G. Althoff, D. Geuenich, O. G. Oexle and J. Wollasch (Sigmaringen, 1988), 187-198, at 187.

¹³⁴ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 888, 130; and for interpretations see Dümmler, *Geschichte*, 320, 359; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 79, n. 49; Poupardin, *Bourgogne*, 14; Castelnouvo, 'Les Élités', 394, n. 40' *LdMA*, VII, c. 1086; Schneidmüller, *Die Welfen*, 78; Bautier, 'Sacres', 47.

overthrow of the emperor Charles the Fat, newly created kings like Rudolf could have acknowledged and pursued different levels of political legitimacy. So, for example, although King Odo underwent both coronation and consecration at the hands of the archbishop of Sens at the ancient royal palace of Compiègne in February 888, his receipt of a crown from king Arnulf prompted a second coronation later in the year, this time at Rheims, on 13th November.¹³⁵ With this in mind, we ought to note how Rudolf underwent an initial coronation at St-Maurice, and it may be that the chance of episcopal mediation of his new royal status was an increasingly desirable accoutrement of political legitimacy. If we follow Regino, then, it seems that contemporaries did indeed think that Rudolf had staked his claim to rule as king of the *regnum Lotharii*. But was this Rudolf's real intention and was his appeal a genuine deployment of Lothar's legacy to the regional aristocracies of the old kingdom?

Whatever Regino may have thought of Rudolf's ambitions, the credibility of his claims that the king sought to rule the entirety of the *regnum Lotharii* is open to challenge. Indeed, it is striking that, other than Regino, no other contemporary source recorded such an explicit intent on the part of Rudolf. The Annals of St-Vaast certainly noted the occasion of the king's coronation at Toul but this was the only ritual undergone by Rudolf recorded in that text and we must consider the distinct possibility that in the eyes of the St-Vaast annalist, it was the Toul coronation which marked the constitutive element in Rudolf's transformation from *marchio* to *rex*.¹³⁶ A worthwhile reminder at this point is how after his own coronation as Lothar's

¹³⁵ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 888, 64, 66.

¹³⁶ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 888, 64f.

successor at Metz in 869, Charles the Bald sought to give substance to his own claims through a series of frantic peregrinations across his newly won territories: in the weeks and months after Metz we find him at Flörchingen on the Meuse, hunting in the Ardennes, and at Douzy, Aachen, Gondreville, Nimwegen and in Alsace.¹³⁷ No such pattern, however, seems to emerge from Rudolf's actions in the aftermath of his coronation at Toul. As far as we can tell he confined himself to his own lands and progressed no further north than the coronation site of Toul itself. Rather than asserting his supposed claims to the *regnum Lotharii*, however, Rudolf's political horizons were in fact much more limited.

Can we offer an alternative explanation for Rudolf's second coronation at Toul? This chapter has argued throughout that appeals were made to the traditions of independent rule in the *regnum Lotharii* as a deliberate response to particular political events. So, too, was this the case with the second coronation at Toul. The event to which he had to respond was another coronation, that of Wido of Spoleto at Langres in early March 888.¹³⁸ The crucial text here is the entry for 888 in the Annals of St-Vaast which recorded quite specifically that Wido's coronation was the first in a series of three events which took place in the month of March, and which was followed in succession by the ordination on March 17th of Bishop Dodilo of Cambrai and then the coronation of Rudolf at Toul, 'Pauci vero ex Burgundia Widonem Lingonis civitate per Geilonem eiusdem civitatis episcopum regem sibi creaverunt. Interim, dum haec aguntur, ordinatur Dodilo Camaracensium vel Atrebatensium ecclesiae episcopus XVI. Kal. Aprilis. At hi qui ultra Iurum atque

¹³⁷ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 869, 164-168 and a. 870, 168.

¹³⁸ For Wido see below, 145-6.

circa Alpes consistunt, Tullo adunati Hrodulfum nepotem Hugonis abbatis per episcopum dictae civitatis benedici in regem petierunt; qui et ita egit'.¹³⁹ Encouraged by no less a figure than his relative the archbishop of Reims, Wido's goal was not a revived *regnum Lotharii* but rather the acquisition of the western kingdom.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, Wido's coronation at Langres evidently had a destabilising effect on Rudolf's own royal standing and it was in response to this that Rudolf underwent his second coronation at Toul.

Wido's focus may have been the western kingdom, but it is clear that his coronation at Langres affected Rudolf's own support in the Burgundian lands. The Annals of St. Vaast is quite specific in recording that it was Burgundians who had Wido crowned king.¹⁴¹ Langres and Toul – the two coronation sites – were seen by the Franks as both pertaining to Burgundy.¹⁴² It was only the artificial frontiers of 843 that had scythed Langres off from the rest of that *regnum* and even despite this, its bishop did still come to the regional palace of Gondreville in the pursuit of that church's interests in the middle kingdom.¹⁴³ Wido, in addition, had connections in this region. In November 882, for example, he was the recipient of a diploma issued by Charles the Fat in which the emperor confirmed a precarial agreement made between the then count Wido and the canon Otbert concerning certain properties of the monastery of Favernay.¹⁴⁴ This monastery lay a short distance to the north of the city of Besançon – the site of one of the episcopal supporters of Rudolf in 888 – and Otbert would later become prior of the church of Langres itself. One known

¹³⁹ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 888, 64-65; Hlawitschka, 'Kaiser Wido', 192-3.

¹⁴⁰ For the *consanguinitas* of Fulco with Wido see *Historia*, Bk. IV, c.3.

¹⁴¹ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 888, 64-65.

¹⁴² *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 837; Parisot, *Lorraine*, 5.

¹⁴³ See e.g. *DLothar II*, nr. 12.

¹⁴⁴ *DCharles the Fat*, nr. 103.

supporter of Wido in Italy was a count Anscar who originated from Burgundy and who held power around Ivrea. We know that a supporter of King Rudolf, the *marchio* William, was also powerful around Ivrea.¹⁴⁵ Later in the tenth century the church of Toul managed to obtain the *villae* of Poulangy and Enfonville through an exchange of the monastery of Varennes with the church of Langres.¹⁴⁶ Poulangy certainly was located in the diocese of Langres and had previously been awarded to the monks of St-Germain d'Auxerre by Charles the Bald in 853.¹⁴⁷ St-Germain, of course, had been a focus of Welf power in the mid ninth century.¹⁴⁸ The point is that connections did exist between Toul and Langres and between our protagonists and these areas.¹⁴⁹ In part through geography, and partly through political association, the two coronation sites of Langres and Toul operated in a closely connected landscape, and Wido, having established himself at Langres, could at the very least hope for support in this north-Burgundian region.¹⁵⁰ Rudolf had to respond. He had to meet Wido's challenge for the support of some of the Burgundians and he did this by undergoing a second coronation, after that of Wido, at Toul.¹⁵¹

Rudolf's second coronation at Toul, therefore, need not be seen as an expression of a genuine attempt to revive the *regnum Lotharii* as a political unit.

¹⁴⁵ S. Gasparri, 'The aristocracy', in *Italy in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. C. La Rocca (Oxford, 2002), 59-84, at 80.

¹⁴⁶ Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 133.

¹⁴⁷ For the 853 grant see *DCharles the Bald*, nr. 156. For the location of Poulangy see Boshof, 'Kloster', 212, n. 110.

¹⁴⁸ See above, 112.

¹⁴⁹ A further hint is suggested by the later associations of Count Manasses of Geneva who we see in Rudolf's service in 899, *DRudolf I*, nr. 7. The nomenclature suggests that he was kin (or perhaps the same man) of the Manasses whom we see as count at Dijon and who was recorded in the *Annals of St-Vaast* as being responsible for the blinding of the bishop of Langres in 894, (*Annales Vedastini*, a. 894, 75).

¹⁵⁰ Significantly, Langres sat at the junction which connected the roads running south from Francia with the principal route to Italy through the Great St. Bernard pass. Wido's control here, alongside the presence of supporters at Ivrea on the Italian side of the Great St. Bernard would have significantly reduced Rudolf's claims to independence and for which see map 3.

¹⁵¹ Schneidmuller, *Die Welfen*, 78.

Rather, the coincidence of his coronation with that of Wido of Spoleto at Langres suggests that the coronation at Toul ought to be interpreted as a quite specific response to the clear attractions which the earlier coronation evidently had upon both Rudolf's Burgundian support and his own strategic position. Rudolf's appeals to an older royal tradition, therefore, were a deliberate advertisement of an alternative royal presence made in response to that being offered by Wido of Spoleto. In the end, such an explanation explains why Rudolf did not seek to realise the territorial extent of the claims made at Toul. In an acknowledgement of the level of support offered to Odo in the west, Wido's claims came to nothing and he retired to Italy to pursue his royal ambitions against Berengar of Friuli.¹⁵² As a consequence, the threat which his presence had upon Rudolf's support in the north of Burgundy now vanished leaving Rudolf to begin the consolidation of his new kingdom.

It remains now to offer an explanation for the failure of the appeals made by both Hugh and Rudolf of Burgundy. I suggest that in order for an alternative identity to have any chance of durability groups need to be 'educated' to that identity. As it will be argued below, however, in the decades following the division of the *regnum Lotharii* at Meerssen the nature of royal interaction with the old kingdom, the links between centre and periphery, were of such a nature that there was no impetus for either the maintenance or fostering of a distinct political identity for the regional aristocracies upon which appeals, like those made by Hugh and Rudolf, could find a natural and responsive audience.

¹⁵² *Annales Vedastini*, a. 888, 65.

3.5: Educating to an Identity. Centre and Periphery, 870-895.

In the earlier sections of this thesis the case was made that Carolingian kings appealed to the traditions of the *regnum Lotharii* essentially as an ideological strategy designed to offer a particular image of royal authority at politically sensitive moments in time. Such a perspective helps to explain the clear ambiguity of the kingdom's position in the geopolitical landscape of the mid-to-late ninth century as suggested by our comparison of the fluctuating appearances of *regnum Lotharii* in the date formulae inserted into the royal diplomas and especially those of Charles the Bald. From such a discussion Lotharingia emerges in the years immediately following the division at Meerssen as a piece of political imagery deployed by kings to promote greater, and particularly imperial, ambitions rather than as an acknowledgement of a distinct geopolitical identity.¹⁵³ Despite this observation, it remains that the division of 870 presented kings with the very real task of extending their rule into new territories. This section will seek to explain the nature of the relationship between the new political centre and the lands of the former *regnum Lotharii* in the years before the establishment of King Zwentibold in 895. At the end the conclusions will complement the earlier sections of this chapter, and indeed the conclusions to Chapter Two, by suggesting that kings, despite their own particular uses of the political memory of the *regnum* in the furtherance of political ambitions, did not in practice seek to realise these ideas of distinction through the establishment of any separate systems of rule. Rather, it seems that Carolingian kings between 870 and 895 simply absorbed their new lands directly into the pre-existing structures of

¹⁵³ Cf. MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 82; Innes, *State and Society*, 223.

their own kingdoms and this, as we shall see, has important implications in locating 'Lotharingia' in the geopolitical map of the late ninth century.¹⁵⁴

The king remained the dominant figure of the late ninth-century political landscape but it is clear that with the death of Lothar II in 869 and the subsequent developments at Meerssen, the local élites now found themselves somewhat distant from the new centres of royal power in the Oise-Aisne valley under Charles the Bald, and those of Louis the German around Frankfurt and Regensburg.¹⁵⁵ Such increased distances did not necessarily constitute an uncomfortable exercise of adaptation for the local aristocracy, nor did they experience any less the presence of the Carolingian monarchy.¹⁵⁶ In one crucial aspect, indeed, the royal presence remained a permanent topographic feature embedded in the landscape through the maintenance of a cluster of palace complexes each of which served to physically project images of royal authority to those inhabiting the surrounding regions.¹⁵⁷ Although it was the great palace of Aachen that continued to fire the imagination of several authors of the late ninth century and the early tenth, and this despite the almost complete absence there of any royal figure after the reign of Louis the Younger (876-882), we ought to remind ourselves that the *regnum Lotharii* was well stocked in palatial complexes: Nijmegen, Meerssen, Herstal, Douzy, Thionville, and Gondreville.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Much of what follows can be seen in map 4 which locates the royal presence in Lotharingia in the years between 870 and Zwentibold's establishment in 895.

¹⁵⁵ Innes, *State and Society*, 227-8.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Innes, *State and Society*, 223.

¹⁵⁷ S. R. Airlie, 'The Palace of Memory: The Carolingian Court as Political Centre', in S. R. Jones, R. Marks, and A. J. Minnis, eds. *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe* (York, 2000), 1-20, at 10-12.

¹⁵⁸ There were also royal palaces associated with monasteries e.g. alongside St-Arnulf at Metz, and Remiremont, see C.-R. Brühl, *Fodrum, Gistum, Servitium regis. Studien zu den wirtschaftlichen Grundlagen des Königtums im Frankenreich und in den fränkischen Nachfolgestaaten Deutschland, Frankreich und Italien vom 6. bis zur Mitte des 14. Jh.* (Cologne and Graz, 1968), II, 29; for Nijmegen see, B. Thiessen, 'The Palace of Nijmegen in the tenth and early eleventh centuries', *The empress Theophano. Byzantium and the West at the turn of the first millennium*, ed. A. Davids (Cambridge, 1995), 265-289.

Some idea of the permanence of the royal presence at each of these sites is seen in the actions of the tenth-century bishop of Metz, Adalbero (929-64) who, in the final throes of the failed rebellion against the Saxon king Otto I in 939, proceeded to Gondreville and there destroyed the palace chapel which, so the later tenth-century author of the report recorded, had been built on the command of the emperor Louis the Pious in imitation of that standing at Aachen.¹⁵⁹ Despite all the structural transformations that apparently marked the shift from the Carolingian polity to that of the Saxon Ottonians, the messages intended by these palatial complexes transcended the vicissitudes of dynastic change and the shift in *Königslandschaften* with which it was accompanied, but which were still understood by political actors a full century and more after the death of the emperor Louis the Pious.¹⁶⁰

We should not overly emphasis the mimetic power of the palace, however, in the absence of the physical presence of the king. As recent historical investigations have reminded us, there was a clear retreat of the royal figure from our region in the years after 870 and this created the potential for unstable political conditions in which aristocrats competed with one another in a local context as increasingly absent kings patronised just one regional backer as the representative of their authority.¹⁶¹ But while it is true that kingship did retreat from our region in the last third of the ninth century, at least until the reign of King Zwentibold, we should not assume that a remote-control approach to rule in the localities remained now the only viable

¹⁵⁹ Adalbert, *Continuatio Reginonis*, ed. F. Kurze, *MGH SRG*, L (Hanover, 1890), a. 939, 161.

¹⁶⁰ The destruction of the Gondreville chapel corresponds with the view of weaker Ottonian control of palaces vis-à-vis the Carolingians but serves only to reinforce the idea of the palace as a powerful representation of royal authority see Airlie, 'The Palace of Memory', 1. On the nature of the Ottonian political system see J. W. Bernhardt, *Itinerant Kingship and Royal Monasteries in Early Medieval Germany, c.936-1075* (Cambridge, 1993); Innes, *State and Society*, 233-241; and particularly, Althoff, *Amicitiae und Pacta*, 3-103.

¹⁶¹ Innes, *State and Society*, 223-5.

option left to kings.¹⁶² The evidence suggests that, at least until the events of 888, the political centre remained a powerful attraction to the local aristocracies of our region and continued to be pulled to wheresoever the court was located, and that the centre itself continued in its attempts to exercise meaningful coercive power in the lands once belonging to Lothar II.

The political centre did make genuine attempts to maintain regular contact with the region and this is best seen by the absorption into the royal itineraries of a series of Lotharingian *palatia* and *civitates*. Certainly, none of the kings who followed Lothar II in the final third of the century could match the virtual permanence that both he and his father, and indeed Louis the Pious and Charlemagne before them, had achieved at Aachen.¹⁶³ Yet, in no way were the kings who followed isolated figures and each of them sought to narrow the distance between the court and the lands of the old *regnum Lotharii*. With the exception of 872, for example, Louis the German travelled to his new territories for part of each year until his death in 876; and in 873 he held assemblies at both Aachen and Metz.¹⁶⁴ This pattern of royal itineration essentially continued unaltered into the reign of his son, Louis the Younger who came to Lotharingia during every year of his reign except 882; he did die, of course, on January 20th of that year.¹⁶⁵ In the reigns of Charles the Fat and Arnulf, royal visits to Lotharingia declined in frequency and this was perhaps the inevitable result of the size of the kingdom over which Charles the Fat came to rule by 884, when he succeeded to the western kingdom, and the location of Arnulf's

¹⁶² For Zwentibold see below, chapter 4.

¹⁶³ Brühl, *Fodrum*, II, 23-24.

¹⁶⁴ Hartmann, *Ludwig der Deutsche*, 102, 147; for Louis the German at Aachen see *DLouis the German*, nrs. 31, 132-3, 147-50.

¹⁶⁵ B-M, nrs. 1547l-m; 1556b-c; 1559b-c; 1562c; 1563; 1565a; 1570a; 1570c.

heartlands in Bavaria following his overthrow of the emperor in late 887. Nevertheless, we should note how both men, despite the obstacles placed in front of them, still managed to make multiple appearances in Lotharingia. Charles came to the region each year from 884 to 886, while Arnulf appeared in 891 and 893 before establishing a more permanent royal presence there in the person of his son Zwentibold in 895.¹⁶⁶

It would have been common participation at royal assemblies that brought the leading men of the kingdom together. So, for example, when the emperor Charles the Fat came to the Alsatian palace of Colmar in 884 to meet with his men and discuss what to do about the Viking menace, he gathered around him participants from across his empire and which included his leading general Henry, a contingent of Bavarians and representatives from the monastery of St. Evre near Toul.¹⁶⁷ Royal assemblies were the stages, therefore, upon which the king broadly assembled the regnal community and recent scholarship has now firmly established just how far these remained the central vehicles for the promotion of unity and corporate identity in early medieval kingdoms.¹⁶⁸ If, in the memorable words of Reuter, assemblies provided the ‘occasions when the polity could represent itself to itself’, is there any evidence that a Lotharingian aristocratic community was mobilised in such a way?

¹⁶⁶ For Charles the Fat see, B.-M., nrs. 1677d; 1688; 1701; 1719; 1745; 1761. For Arnulf see., *ibid.*, nrs. 1796; 1862; 1883c.

¹⁶⁷ *Annales Fuldenses* (M), a. 884, 101; *DCharles the Fat*, n. 94-95 for grants made at Colmar to Abbot Fulbert of St. Evre and Otbert; *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 884 for the participation of the Bavarians and the decision to send them against Wido in Italy.

¹⁶⁸ Crucial for assemblies are, T. Reuter, ‘Assembly Politics in Western Europe from the Eighth Century to the Twelfth’, in *The Medieval World*, ed. P. Linehan and J. L. Nelson (London, 2001), 432-50; id. ‘Regemque, quem in Francia pene perdidit, in patria magnifice recepit: Ottonian Ruler Representation in Synchronic and Diachronic Comparison’, in *Herrschaftsrepräsentation im Ottonian Sachsen*, ed. G. Althoff and E. Schubert, *Vorträge und Forschungen*, xlv (Sigmaringen, 1998), 363-80; P. S. Barnwell and M. Mostert, eds. *Political Assemblies in the Earlier Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 2003) offers a number of valuable essays on assemblies but in particular see, S. Airlie, ‘Talking Heads: Assemblies in Early Medieval Germany’, 29-46.

In other words, if assemblies provided the occasions at which the essentially abstract conception of the *regnum* was given physical manifestation, then was Lotharingia given any cohesion at all through the assembly of its aristocratic communities?

The military situation of 884 must account in large part for the multi-regnal gathering that the emperor brought together at Colmar in that year. Decisions were reached both about the defence against the Vikings in Francia and the nature of the response against Wido in Italy, and as a consequence, campaigns were launched against both.¹⁶⁹ Such broad participation was seen too in the army gathered two years previously by the emperor against the Vikings at Asselt and which was composed of contingents from throughout the empire: Franks, Bavarians, Alemans, Thuringians and Saxons.¹⁷⁰ Certainly, we ought to acknowledge that there was an overlap between assemblies and the mustering of the army, but the impression remains that even at those more routine political assemblies convoked by the king, multi-regnal participation remained a common factor.¹⁷¹

Although perhaps something more than routine, the assembly which gathered at Aachen following the conclusion of the negotiations at Meerssen, provides an instructive example. It was here in August 870, at what had been the principal seat of both Lothar I and Lothar II, that we might have expected the display of family consciousness proclaimed by Louis the German in the first diploma issued by him there following the Meerssen division, 'pro remedio animae domni avi ac genitoris

¹⁶⁹ *Annales Fuldenses* (M), a. 884, 101; *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 884, 110.

¹⁷⁰ *Annales Fuldenses*, (M), a. 882, 98; cf. Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 876, 112 for the army which Louis the Younger gathered at Andernach, 'exercitum ex Saxonia, Turingia, et orientali Francia'.

¹⁷¹ On the overlap between assemblies and the mustering of the army, see Airlie, 'Talking Heads', 34-36.

nec non fratris nostri Hlotharii suique filii et aequivoci'.¹⁷² But, it is significant that this one instance of commemoration on the part of the king did not accompany a grant to some erstwhile Lotharingian *fidelis* but rather the award of the *villa* of Litzig in Saxony to the monastery of Corvey.

Evidently, *fideles* from all over Louis' kingdom accompanied the king on the journey to claim his share of the *regnum Lotharii*, and it was this multi-regnal audience that retired with Louis to Aachen. That audience, too, must have included Archbishop Liutbert of Mainz and the Saxon bishops of Minden, Münster and Osnabrück who, alongside the archbishops of Trier and Cologne, assembled on the order of the king to begin their synodal deliberations on September 26th, the day following the grant of Litzig to Corvey.¹⁷³ Of course, there were those more local beneficiaries like Abbot Ansbold of Prüm who received a grant from the king on October 17th, but it is clear that the audience that gathered at Aachen throughout the months of September and October of 870, was of a multi-regnal nature. Unlike Charles the Bald at Metz in the previous September, Louis does not seem to have sought to activate his authority in his new territories with some kind of inauguration ceremony aimed at the local aristocratic community. Louis and his entourage simply rolled in and got down to business as usual.

Assemblies did take place in Lotharingia where, in 879 and 886, general assemblies were convoked at Metz by Louis the Younger and Charles the Fat.¹⁷⁴ The important point in this context is that, throughout the period, assemblies were drew

¹⁷² *DLouis the German*, n. 132.

¹⁷³ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 870, 72.

¹⁷⁴ B.-M. nrs. 1562c and 1719.

participants from throughout the entire kingdom. The apparently secret business that brought Louis the German to Aachen in 873, for example, did not deter petitioners from Alsace and Saxony, as well as more local ones, from seeking out royal munificence.¹⁷⁵ Equally important, from this perspective, was the attendance of Lotharingian nobles at assemblies in other regions of the east Frankish kingdom. Indeed, the peregrinations in 870 of Ansbold, the abbot of Prüm, when he followed the king from Aachen to Frankfurt, receiving royal diplomas at both locations, likely represents a common experience.¹⁷⁶

This all means that for those participants from the old *regnum Lotharii*, the corporate identity advertised and inculcated through regular attendance and participation at assemblies was one defined in terms of the *Gesamtreich*. At this level, the perception of any Lotharingian aristocratic community, had it existed, was overshadowed by the larger aristocratic community of the kingdom which came together on these occasions. However, assemblies could occur at a lower level and it is here, perhaps, that we ought to look for any sense of a Lotharingian aristocratic unity. We know, for example, that within the Ottonian *Reich*, Saxony held its own assemblies.¹⁷⁷ It appears that in Carolingian times too, the capability of corporate action on the part of some of the regions of the *regnum Francorum* did exist. There exists little by way of evidence for such a capability of corporate action on the part of the Lotharingian élites.

¹⁷⁵ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 873, 78; *DLouis the German*, n. 147 for the monastery of Stavelot; nrs. 148-9 for the church of Strasbourg; and n. 150 to the Saxon count Ricdag of the monastery of Lamspringe.

¹⁷⁶ *DLouis the German*, n. 133 issued at Aachen on October 17th; and n. 134, issued at Frankfurt on November 1st. Even a great royal monastery like Prüm experienced frantic peregrinations in maintaining contact with the court and we can see the monastery's representatives travelling to the court at Frankfurt in 870-871, 873, 880, and 888 and to Worms in 882 and 888, see B.-M., nrs. 1484; 1485; 1489-90; 1492; 1566; 1638; 1683-4; 1794.

¹⁷⁷ Airlie, 'Talking Heads', 44.

As we have seen, royal visits in the reign of Louis the German were not few and far between. The local aristocracies regularly saw the king as he journeyed to the region, and this was a trend that continued undisturbed by the king's death and the succession of Louis the Younger (876-882).¹⁷⁸ In part, the king journeyed to his lands west of the Rhine because they offered additional residences and so it was at Aachen, for example, that Louis celebrated Christmas in 877.¹⁷⁹ But, there were also a series of pressing political problems that continued to draw the royal presence into the region.

Certainly, it was the recurring need to regularise the nature of his relationship with the kings of the west, and which was made all the more necessary by the death in succession of Charles the Bald (877) and Louis the Stammerer (879), that demanded the presence of Louis the Younger in the westerly parts of his own lands. Thus, at the beginning of his reign, and having successfully met the military challenge of Charles the Bald at Andernach, Louis returned in triumph to the palace of Aachen.¹⁸⁰ Again, he returned in the following year while *en route* to Maastricht and discussions with Louis the Stammerer, whose succession had followed upon the death of the emperor while in Italy, and which would in the end lead to the conclusion of the treaty of Fourn.¹⁸¹ Likewise, it was Louis' attempts throughout 879-880 to exploit the factionalism amongst the leading men of the western kingdom

¹⁷⁸ Louis' died on January 20th 882 but did journey to the region in each year of the reign to that point; see, B-M., nr. 15471-m, 1556b-c, 1559b-c, 1560, 1562c, 1563a-b, 1565a, 1567a, 1570a-c.

¹⁷⁹ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 877, 90.

¹⁸⁰ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 876, 89. Hincmar tells us that the king resided there for 3 days before heading to Coblenz for a meeting with his brother, Charles the Fat, *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 876, 210.

¹⁸¹ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 878, 230; *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 878, 92; *MGH Capit*, II., nr. 169; B-M., nr. 1559c, 1560.

over who ought to succeed the recently deceased Stammerer, that saw the king reside for periods of time at Metz, Verdun and Aachen.¹⁸²

Such occasions were not just sedentary moments in the royal *iter* but in effect were mustering points for the royal army as it gathered and waited for the moment of intervention in the western kingdom. The royal presence, therefore, was not limited simply to the radiating power of the king sitting at the heart of the court but could also, on occasion, be imposed upon the landscape at the point of the sword. It was the need to re-establish royal authority in the region of Verdun, for example, that led Louis the Younger to dispatch certain *fideles* to deal with the increasing agitation of Hugh, the bastard son of Lothar II, in 879. So it was that such occasions, even in the absence of the king himself, could provide the opportunity by which the coercive power of the monarchy could be deployed in the landscape – for those who challenged royal authority in 879, this took the form of mutilation, exile and death.

Military campaigns increasingly became the most obvious representation of royal power in our region from the early 880s, for as the number of adult Carolingian rulers diminished across the *regnum Francorum*, and alongside the evident power in these years of the Vikings to intervene in Frankish political life, it was likely that kings would only ever come to this region at the head of the army. Certainly, of all the Carolingian rulers of the late ninth century, it was in the reign of Charles the Fat that the distance between the royal centre and the *regnum Lotharii* reached its greatest extent.¹⁸³ Despite the transformation in the geopolitical landscape of the *re-*

¹⁸² Metz: *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 879, 236-7; Verdun: *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 879, 8; *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 879, 236-7; Aachen: *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 880, 240.

¹⁸³ MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 81.

gnum Francorum, however, it was this increasingly militaristic guise that continued to represent the most visible face of kingship for the élites of the region in those years prior to the establishment of king Zwentibold in 895.

Certainly, we ought to acknowledge that there had always been an overlap between the institution of the general assembly and the mustering of the Frankish army – the political community, indeed, was often referred to by contemporary authors as ‘the army’.¹⁸⁴ Yet, even in allowing for this, the impression of Charles the Fat’s reign remains one in which warfare dominates as the primary expression of royal power and which served as the means through which its authority was brought into our region. For the most part, it was the increasing success of Viking arms that demanded such a response: they attacked, amongst other places throughout the course of 881 and 882, the cities of Cologne, Trier and Koblenz; the monastery of Prüm; and the great palace of Aachen, ‘where they used the king’s chapel as a stable for their horses’.¹⁸⁵ These and a series of further attacks lasting until 885 suggest the extent to which the normal conditions necessary for the maintenance of the royal *iter* had been disrupted; a picture somewhat confirmed by Regino of Prüm’s description of fiscland being deliberately targeted by the Viking leader Godafrið in that latter year.¹⁸⁶

In the light of such conditions, therefore, the emperor could only realistically reside in this distant part of his *regnum* when an army had been gathered and dispatched against the Viking marauders. It was at Asselt close to the river Meuse,

¹⁸⁴ T. Reuter, ‘Carolingian and Ottonian Warfare’, in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval Warfare*, ed. M. Keen (Oxford, 1999), 15-35.

¹⁸⁵ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 881, 97.

¹⁸⁶ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 885, 123-4.

for example, that a great imperial army gathered to besiege the fortress of the Viking force that had earlier so effectively plundered the lands of northern Francia in 881 and 882.¹⁸⁷ One version of the *Annals of Fulda* shows how such occasions transcended the simply military aspect of the situation at hand, although this of course remained important, to be seen as expressions of imperial and royal authority. On this occasion, such expectations are revealed in the obvious disappointment in the report of the behaviour of the emperor and his court: despite the pending victory over the Vikings, treachery at the heart of the court served to rob the army of its chance; and the emperor himself, who ought to have taken tribute from his enemies, instead sponsored the baptism of their leader Godafrid and endowed him with *honores*.¹⁸⁸

As Simon MacLean has recently argued, this particular version of the siege of Asselt represents less a genuine report of that event than it does an attack upon the imperial reputation produced in the circle of archbishop Liutbert of Mainz in response to his replacement as archchancellor by Liutbert of Vercelli.¹⁸⁹ But, for all that this text represented a particular commentary on imperial attributes, it still had to be credible to an audience and it is this which makes it useful for our purposes. For, despite the accuracy or otherwise of the charges laid against the behaviour of the emperor, the army did possess genuine corporate expectations of its king and emperor. Even if we relegate the usefulness of this particularly polemical text, it does still show that the gathering of the army represented one of the great occasions on which images of kingship were transmitted to representatives from the localities,

¹⁸⁷ Reuter, *Annals of Fulda*, 92, n. 7 for the identification of *Ascloha* as Asselt. This was an imperial army not simply in the sense that the emperor commanded it, but that it contained contingents from Francia, Bavaria, Alemannia, Thuringia and Saxony (*Annales Fuldenses* (M), a. 882, 98).

¹⁸⁸ *Annales Fuldenses* (M), a. 882, 98-9.

¹⁸⁹ MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, chapter 1 but especially, 30-37.

and then returned to the provinces for further transmission. The mustering of the army, therefore, linked the political centre to the peripheries of the kingdom in more ways than simple congregation of regnal contingents.¹⁹⁰

It was the nature of royal access to the regions of the old *regnum Lotharii* which actually prohibited the development there of a distinct political identity. This meant that although appeals could be made to particular traditions of kingship in that region, there did not yet exist amongst the inhabitants of the old kingdom a sense of political distinctiveness that could have responded positively to appeals when they were made. In essence, the inhabitants of the old kingdom had not been educated to think of themselves in terms of being politically distinct from the other provinces and regions of the Frankish kingdom. Since 870, in fact, the experience of the Lotharingian aristocracy was one of incorporation into the regional associations of the Frankish kingdom at large. This meant that for those Lotharingian élites inhabiting the region that fell to Louis the German in 870, their interaction with the king came to unfold at the great royal sites of Frankfurt and Mainz, while in the west in the years before the treaty of Ribemont, the regional aristocracies of western Lotharingia came to focus their attentions on a royal topography centred on the Oise-Seine valley. The lasting success of this incorporation of the Lotharingian regional élites into the kingdoms of Charles the Bald and Louis the German in the years following 870 is revealed by the 'leaseback' arrangement which was contracted between the eastern kings, Louis the Younger and Charles the Fat, and their young

¹⁹⁰ Other instances of Charles the Fat and the army in Lotharingia see *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 882, 109, for the disbanding of the Asselt army at Koblenz, 'cuncto exercitui amabilem licentiam redeundi concessit'; it was evidently in such a context that the murder of Godafrid and the blinding of Hugh took place at Gondreville in 885, see *Annales Fuldenses* (M), a. 885, 102, and (B), a. 885, 114; the emperor was also at Metz in 886 prior to his journey to join the army relieving the Viking siege of

western nephews, Louis III and Carloman II following the treaty of Ribemont in 880. By the terms of the arrangement the western half of Lotharingia, which had only just been ceded to Louis the Younger, was returned as a lease to the western kings.¹⁹¹ As Hincmar records, however, the magnates of this western half of Lotharingia clearly wanted to make that lease a more permanent arrangement, ‘Venientes autem primores partis illius regni quae ipsi Hludouuico in locarium data fuerat, quatenus quae pater at avus illorum hebuerunt eis consentiret, voluerunt se illi commendare’.¹⁹² Louis declined their wishes, but that attempt should stand as a salutary reminder of the degree to which both halves of Lotharingia came to be fully incorporated into the eastern and western kingdoms in only a few short years after the division at Meersen.

Towards the end of the ninth century, therefore, it is possible to uncover a Lotharingia that, in the years following the divisions made at Meersen, had become fully incorporated the eastern and western kingdoms. Although the treaty of Ribemont had officially brought the eastern half of the old kingdom into the hands of Louis the Younger, the reality of the situation was that the western kings Louis III and Carloman II continued to exercise *de facto* authority here and that, importantly, the magnates themselves sought to reaffirm that political relationship which the Ribemont agreement had apparently rescinded. The existence of an aristocratic community that looked to the west and another, whose associations drew its attention to the east, speaks forcefully against the idea of a permanent and immutable political *regnum Lotharii* in the final third of the ninth century. The failure of Hugh’s appeals

Paris, see *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 886, 105; we also have evidence of the emperor near Toul in June 885, see, *DCharles the Fat*, 120 and 121.

¹⁹¹ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 882, 245-6 and discussed in MacLean, ‘Carolingian response’, 21-48.

¹⁹² *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 882, 245.

to that political legacy, and that of Rudolf I of Burgundy, show that there was no real desire amongst the regions élites for a return to a independent political structure such as had existed under Lothar II. This remained an unchanged state of affairs by the time that King Arnulf sought to establish his son Zwentibold as king of the *regnum Lotharii* in 895. As we will see in the next chapter, Arnulf's use of the *regnum Lotharii* as a suitable royal tradition for his son fits again into the mould, which we have already uncovered in this thesis, of an elastic and malleable political legacy that was available for deployment by kings.

Chapter 4

Lotharingia Reactivated? The Reign of King Zwentibold.

4.1: The re-establishment of the *regnum Lotharii*, 895.

The kingdom which had previously belonged to Lothar II, and which had passed into apparent extinction with the treaty of Meerssen in 870, was given a new lease of political life by the east-Frankish king Arnulf when, in the final days of May 895, it was placed into the custody of his eldest son Zwentibold. Although such an eventuality may already have been in the king's thoughts as early as 892 when Zwentibold received some of Megingoz's *honores*, hitherto the most powerful count of the region who had recently been murdered by aristocratic rivals jealous of his political dominance, it was Arnulf's confrontation with a series of political concerns in the course of 894/5 that finally determined him upon endowing his son with the kingdom of Lothar II.¹

After an initial setback in his plans for Zwentibold, an incident to which we shall return below, Arnulf presided over the ritual of his son's transformation to kingly status at Worms in May 895. The sources are not in full agreement over the processes by which that transformation took place. It seems likely, however, that Zwentibold was crowned, almost certainly at the hands of his father, that he received the acclamation of his new subjects gathered at Worms, and that the divinely

¹ For Megingoz's murder and the subsequent grant of *honores* to Zwentibold: Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 892, 140 and for discussion see Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 110-12; Althoff, *Amicitiae und Pacta*, 219-223; Innes, *State and Society*, 226; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 196 for the subsequent Matfridinger possession of St-Maximin based on the statement of the *Libellus de rebus Treverensibus*, c. 13-14, ed. G. Waitz, *MGH SS*, XIV (Hanover, 1846), 98-106 at 104.

ordained nature of his new royal status was given outward expression in his receipt of unction.²

For all that both ecclesiastical and secular ritual had a long history in Frankish and Carolingian royal inaugurations, the nature of Zwentibold's promotion in 895 remains a curious development.³ Certainly, in 751 coronation and consecration had marked the transformation of Pippin III and his family into a new *stirps regia*, and in the next century, above all in the western kingdom, these rituals had become something of a necessary accoutrement of all royal inaugurations.⁴ Yet, such traditions did not much influence the form of succession ritual in the east Frankish kingdom of Louis the German and his successors where, by way of comparison, it was not until the inauguration of Louis the Child in 900 that any contemporary source linked the acquisition of the kingdom with the receipt of a crown and other royal trappings, 'proceres et optimates, qui sub dicione Arnulfi fuerant, ad Foracheim in unum congregati Ludowicum filium prefati principis, quem ex legitimo matrimonio suscepit, regem super se creant et coronatum regisque ornamentis indutum in fastigio regni sublimant'.⁵

² *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 895, 126, 'Zwentiboldus ergo filius regis infulam regni a patre suscipiens in Burgundia et omni Hlotharico regno receptis eiusdem regni primoribus rex creatus est'; *Annales Vedastini*, a. 895, 75, 'filium que suum rex Arnulfus in praesentia Odoni regis nomine Zuendebolchum benedici in regem fecit eique concessit regnum quondam Hlotharii'; Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 895, 143, 'in quo conventu omnibus assentientibus atque collaudantibus Zuendebolch filium regno Lotharii prefecit'.

³ Generally for coronations see the articles in J. M. Bak, ed. *Coronations: Medieval and Early Modern Monarchic Ritual* (Berkeley, Oxford, 1990); more specifically for our purposes see J. L. Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', in *Early Medieval Kingship*, ed. P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (Leeds, 1977), 50-71, reprinted in her *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London and Ronceverte, 1986), 283-307; C.-R. Brühl, 'Kronen- und Krönungsbrauch im Frühen und Hohen Mittelalter', *HZ*, ccxxxiv (1982), 1-31 and Bautier, 'Sacres et couronnements'.

⁴ Bautier, 'Sacres et couronnements', 7-17 and 33ff.

⁵ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 900, 147-8; Brühl, 'Krönungsbrauch', 17 who notes the first east Frankish consecration as that of Conrad I in 911.

The elaborately orchestrated transformation of Zwentibold's status undertaken by Arnulf in the summer of 895 represented a clear departure from the recent traditions of royal inauguration in the eastern kingdom.⁶ Arnulf's own elevation to royal status at the expense of the emperor Charles the Fat in 887 was presumably accompanied by oaths but there was no specific ritualised declaration of either his victory in the political struggle or his subsequent assumption of royal authority.⁷ The remarks of the Mainz annalist that Arnulf simply started to rule in place of the emperor are echoed in the other contemporary source material, 'Nam omnes optimates Francorum, qui contra imperatorem conspiraverant, ad se [Arnulf] venientes in suum suscepit dominium; venire nolentes beneficiis privavit nichilque imperatori nisi vilissimas ad serviendum reliquit personas'.⁸

The coronation, consecration and acclamation of Zwentibold, therefore, requires some comment. Normally each of the components which were employed at the Worms inauguration would not have been a necessary constituent in establishing an east-Frankish subkingdom.⁹ Yet, the recent difficulties faced by Charles the Fat in providing for his own succession, and in particular his failure to overcome the opposition raised to the illegitimate status of his Bernhard, makes it likely that Arnulf

⁶ For east-Frankish traditions see F.-R. Erkens, 'Der Herrscher als gotes Drút. Zur Sakralität des ungesalbten ostfränkischen Königs', *HJ*, cxviii (1998), 1-39.

⁷ Arnulf may have undergone a coronation at Regensburg but this is far from certain see Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*, 386 and n. 195.

⁸ *Annales Fuldenses* (M), a. 887, 106; c.f., *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 887, 115 which stresses the hasty transfer of power from the emperor to Arnulf, 'Igitur veniente Karolo imperatore Franconofurt isti invitaverunt Arnolfum filium Karlmanni regis ipsumque ad seniorelem eligerunt, sine mora statuerunt ad regem extolli'; *Annales Vedastini*, a. 887, 64 that Charles was simply 'eiecto eo de regno, Arnolfum filium Karlomanni, qui eius erat nepos, in regni solio ponunt'; and Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 887, 127-8, 'Arnolfum filium Carlomanni ultro in regnum adtrahunt et subito facta conspiratione ab imperatore deficientes ad predictum virum certatim transeunt'.

⁹ Although technically not *reges*, each of Louis the German's sons was placed without any ritual of power assumption in various regions of the east Frankish kingdom, see Hartmann, *Ludwig der Deutsche*, 66-76 and Kasten, *Königssöhne*, 466ff.

would have been more than aware of his own need to provide extra substance for his own son's kingship when he finally decided to set him up as *rex* in the summer of 895.¹⁰

This was because Zwentibold, like Bernhard before him, was born from a type of traditional union that was becoming increasingly unacceptable to church figures and thus a potential object of political significance.¹¹ Evidently, Zwentibold had been born during the short-lived period of alliance between Arnulf's father, King Carloman of Bavaria, and the Moravian prince Zwentibold, which had been brokered in 870 and to celebrate which the Moravian had stood as godfather to the new-born Carolingian to whom he also gave his name.¹² That a Carolingian son could have been so named is indicative of Zwentibold's status upon his birth, and this impression is confirmed by the virtual anonymity which surrounds the identification of his mother, the otherwise unknown *femina nobilis* Winpurc.¹³

Moreover, in the competitive and populated royal landscape which had emerged across the *regnum Francorum* in the course of 888, and in parts of which kings of non-Carolingian descent now ruled, degrees of political legitimacy became important. We have already seen how both Rudolf I of Burgundy and King Odo thought it necessary to each undergo a second coronation in 888. Yet, for the new of

¹⁰ For Charles' efforts to legitimate Bernhard see MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 129-34, 168-9.

¹¹ Scharer, 'Alfred the Great and Arnulf of Carinthia', 315-317.

¹² Regino records the story of the baptism in his account of Arnulf's concession of Bohemian overlordship to the Moravian Zwentibold in 890 but it is clear that it must have taken place much earlier than this date. (Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 890, 134); Parisot, *Lorraine*, 515; M. Hartmann, 'Lotharingien in Arnolfs Reich. Das Königtum Zwentibolds', in F. Fuchs and P. Schmid, eds. *Kaiser Arnolf: Das ostfränkische Reich am Ende des 9. Jahrhunderts* (Münich, 2002), 123.

¹³ *Die Urkunden Arnulfs*, ed. P. Kehr, *MGH Diplomata regum Germaniae ex stirpe Karolinorum* (Berlin, 1940), [hereafter, *DArnulf*], nr. 160; Dümmler, *Geschichte*, 331 n. 3; *DRudolf I, Einleitung*, 3; Hartmann, 'Lotharingien', 124.

the west, even this and the receipt of a royal crown from Arnulf himself, was not enough to save him from the accusation of archbishop Fulk of Reims in a letter to the eastern king in 893 that Odo was simply a tyrant, and not one of the legitimate royal house.¹⁴ Arnulf himself, of course, could not have been accused of such deficiencies. He was, as the only king to be descended from a male Carolingian in 888, the *naturalis dominus*.¹⁵ Yet, as Fulk's denunciation of Odo to Arnulf would later show, the debate over political legitimacy did penetrate to the very heart of the eastern court. Certainly, Arnulf's own status was not in doubt, but it is clear that when it came to the matter of providing for his own succession, even he could not escape the implications of the current heightened expectations of political legitimacy.

It was not just kings, and king-makers like Fulk, who were connoisseurs of degrees of political legitimacy.¹⁶ The ranks of the aristocracy, too, had their own ideas about king-worthiness, and it was precisely such concerns which presented Arnulf with the first of his problems in providing for the succession. Shortly after his assumption of power, the new king of the east Franks held a general assembly at Forchheim and sought to extract oaths from the assembled *primores*, as he had earlier from the Bavarians, which acknowledged the right of his two sons Zwentibold and Ratold to each inherit a share in the rulership and government of the kingdom, *principatus vel dominatus*.¹⁷ Yet, as the Bavarian continuation of the Annals of Fulda recorded, the king's efforts met with a quite unenthusiastic response from a significant number of the magnates assembled at Forchheim. The problem was that both Zwentibold and his brother were stained with illegitimacy, and although the

¹⁴ *Historia*, IV, 5; Airlie, 'Nearly Men', 26-30.

¹⁵ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 888, 129.

¹⁶ Airlie, 'Nearly Men', 33.

¹⁷ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 889, 118.

king did get his way in the end, the magnates' acceptance was only provisional and was to expire with the arrival of a legitimately born heir, 'ibique [Forchheim] disputans de statu regni sui consultum est, ut eodem tenore primores Francorum prout Baioarii iuramento confirmarent, ne se detraherent a principatu vel dominatu filiorum eius, Zwentibulchi quidem et Ratoldi, qui ei de concubinis erant nati. Quod quidam Francorum ad tempus rennuentes, tandem regie satisficientes voluntati dextram dare non recusabant, eo tamen modo, ut si de legali sua uxore heres ei non produceretur'.¹⁸

The point requires some clarification. The resistance put up by the assembled Frankish *optimates* at Forchheim was not a demonstration on their part of ninth-century aristocratic snobbery in matters of parentage. Certainly, similar results of a 'randy, promiscuous way of life' must have been common throughout the ranks of the aristocracy.¹⁹ In 875 for example a certain Macharius contracted a precarial agreement with the church of Cambrai whose terms were to run for the duration of his own life, that of his wife Gundrada and those of his children including those born from other men, 'et infans nomine Achildis, quam ipsa coniunx nostra Gundrada de alio viro peperit'.²⁰ Nevertheless, in the face of increasingly unsympathetic episcopal attitudes, such unions were increasingly open to political attack. The birth, therefore, of Louis the Child to Queen Ota in the autumn of 893 fundamentally altered Zwentibold's position within the succession plans. With the arrival of a fully

¹⁸ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 889, 118; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 209-210; Kasten, *Königssöhne*, 548.

¹⁹ Scharer, 'Alfred of Wessex and Arnulf of Carinthia', 316f.

²⁰ *Gesta episcoporum Cameracensium*, 420. Regino also records similar associations within the ranks of Hugh's supporters which included a Bernarius who was killed by Hugh so that he could marry the widow Friderada. This Friderada, so Regino records, had previously had relations with Engilramnus from which union a daughter was born. This daughter was later married to, and executed by, Count Richin of Verdun, 'quam etiam propter stuprum commissum idem comes decollari iussit', (Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 883, 121).

legitimate Carolingian prince, and one bearing such an eminently regal name as Louis, the provisional nature of the Forchheim oaths finally took effect. Could Zwentibold compete?²¹

For all that Arnulf was constricted by the demands forced upon him at the Forchheim assembly, he nevertheless remained determined to secure a royal future for his eldest son. Thus, in the years before and after the birth of the young Louis, the king sought to endow Zwentibold both with the substance of some real power and to highlight his regal credentials for the job.²² We have seen already how in 892, in the aftermath of the murder of count Megingoz, Zwentibold received the dead man's *honores*, including possibly the great monastic house of St-Maximin at Trier.²³ In preparation for his own later descent into Italy, Arnulf despatched his son with an army against the emperor Wido in the autumn of 893.²⁴ In the following year, Zwentibold was again despatched against one of his father's enemies, on this occasion Rudolf I of Burgundy, and in a successful campaign brought the bishopric of Besançon back under east-Frankish control.²⁵ Both of these campaigns ought to be seen as attempts to provide some substance to Arnulf's claims that his son was a throne-worthy candidate. Despite the efforts of his father, however, it is clear that Zwentibold's claims to a royal future could not compete alongside those possessed by Louis the Child. A substantial quantitative improvement in his status was

²¹ Mohr, 'Lothringische Politik', 173; id, 'Die Rolle Lothringens', 382.

²² Kasten, *Königssöhne*, 548-9.

²³ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 892, 140; for the grant of St-Maximin to Megingoz, *Sigehard, Miracula s. Maximini*, part. ed. G. Waitz, *MGH SS*, IV (Hanover, 1846), 230-34, cc. 8-9; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 77, 110; Kasten, *Königssöhne*, 548.

²⁴ Parisot, *Lorraine*, 516; Schieffer, *Kanzlei*, 26; Kasten, *Königssöhne*, 549.

²⁵ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 894, 125; *Series archiepiscoporum Bisontinorum*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH SS*, XIII (Hanover, 1881), 370-73, at 373, 'Per hunc restituit Zuentebolchus rex ecclesiae sancti Stephani villam Pauliaci'; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 125; Schneidmüller, *Die Welfen*, 80-1; Hartmann, 'Lotharingien', 124.

necessary, and it was through coronation, consecration and acclamation that Arnulf sought to achieve this in the summer of 895.

The decision to endow Zwentibold with a resuscitated *regnum Lotharii* in the summer of 895, and the form of the rituals which accompanied his transformation at Worms, ought in part to be seen as an attempt by Arnulf to negotiate the barriers which the birth of Louis the Child had predictably thrown up against Zwentibold's own chances of participating in the succession to the eastern kingdom. In a move which represented the last example in what was a long tradition of Frankish *Reichsteilungen*, Arnulf's decision to partition his own kingdom allowed him to establish a separate *regnum* for Zwentibold, whilst all the time continuing to acknowledge the young Louis' indisputable right to a royal inheritance.²⁶ As with those other occasions on which we have seen the *regnum Lotharii* emerge again into view in our sources, immediate political practicality, which in this case was the king's need to resolve his succession plans, partly explains the re-emergence of the kingdom in 895. Yet, for all that a resolution to the succession question explains Arnulf's motives in that year, there were, in all likelihood, several other reasons why the king determined upon the kingdom's resuscitation at this point in time. Each of these reasons, moreover, shows how appeals to that past tradition could help smooth the passage of contemporary political challenges.

For all that a resolution to the issue of the succession must have played the major part in influencing Arnulf's decision to re-establish the *regnum Lotharii*, the

²⁶ *DRudolf I, Einleitung*. We should not overlook too the king's need to balance his relationship with the greatest families of the kingdom. Thus establishing Zwentibold meant opening up opportunities for those not close to the Conradiner, the family of Queen Oda and the future beneficiaries of the young Louis' succession.

passage of almost a full two years from the birth of the young Louis to the occasion of Zwentibold's coronation argues against it being the only factor at work in the events of 895. In particular, although Arnulf was able, in effect, to resuscitate the most recent of political structures in the region, why did he choose this one for his son rather than any of the others that had been established for royal scions in the course of the ninth century? The king's clash in 894 with his political rivals, the emperor Wido and king Rudolf of Burgundy, offers one explanation. Here, only a short account of the campaigns need detain us for their significance lies in how they may have encouraged the idea of a resuscitated *regnum Lotharii* to take root as a viable political response.

The nature of the relationship between Arnulf and Wido was defined by the fact that, for the eastern king, the king of Italy presented a genuine challenge to Arnulf's own claims to hegemony in the post-888 political landscape. Part of Wido's threat was that his support was not confined to Italy, where he had been crowned king at Pavia in February 889, and from where he quickly manoeuvred himself into a combative position against the east Frankish king. We have already seen how in 888 Wido was initially supported in his western ambitions by his kinsman Fulk of Reims, and it may be that the potential activation of such long-standing associations throughout Francia was enough to cause Arnulf some concern. Certainly, earlier members of this family, the Widonids, had connections with the Prüm dependency of St-Goar and the monasteries of Hornbach and Mettlach in the environs of Trier.²⁷ Indeed Widonid associations at Mettlach may still have been

²⁷ Wandalbert, *Vita et Miracula S. Goaris*, c. 4, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH SS*, XV, 361-373. For Widonid control at Hornbach in the reign of Lothar I see *DLothar I*, nrs. 15-17 and for indirect evidence of the family's regaining of Mettlach from the emperor in 840-841, *DLothar I*, nr. 67 which placed the monastery back under the control of Trier. A useful commentary on this whole episode is

active in the final years of the ninth century for, in 888 itself, Arnulf thought it prudent to issue a diploma confirming the monastery's possession by Trier.²⁸ Wido must still have been considered a potential threat to Arnulf's position. In 890 he offered a place of refuge to Bernhard, the son of the deposed emperor Charles the Fat, in the aftermath of his rebellion against Arnulf in that year.²⁹ In the years immediately following, he sought to fortify his own position by firstly securing the imperial title, and then having his son Lambert crowned as co-emperor at Ravenna at Easter 892.³⁰ The final move towards armed conflict, however, was encouraged by Pope Formosus, who in the same year that he crowned Lambert, sent legates north begging Arnulf to take the Italian kingdom into his own hands.³¹ As we have seen, the king's initial response was to despatch Zwentibold, albeit unsuccessfully, against the emperor at Pavia.³² However, it was in the following year, 894, that Arnulf himself descended into Italy.

The campaign of 894 marked the first stage in the process which would culminate in Arnulf's own imperial coronation at Rome in the early weeks of 896.³³ To all intents and purposes, however, Wido's power-base was destroyed in the course of the king's first assault. In a speedy demonstration of force at Bergamo, Arnulf quickly took the city, hanged its count, and came into the possession of a

provided by Innes, *State and Society*, 211 and for the earlier Widonids see E. Hlawitschka, 'Die Widonen im Dukat von Spoleto', *QFIAB* (1983), 20-92 and for Wido and Lambert, id, 'Waren die Kaiser Wido und Lambert Nachkommen Karls des Großen', *QFIAB* (1969), 366-86.

²⁸ *DArnulf*, nr. 39.

²⁹ For Bernhard's rebellion see Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 488-492; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 108 and n. 160, 122.

³⁰ Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 123; Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*, 514.

³¹ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 893, 122; Reuter, *Annals of Fulda*, 126, n. 7 suggests that the tensions between Wido and Pope Formosus, who had crowned Lambert on April 30 892, may have increased to this extent following an imperial visit to Rome in that year.

³² Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 124.

³³ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 896, 128; a *terminus ante quem* for the coronation is provided by Arnulf's first 'imperial' diploma dated February 27 896, *DArnulf*, nr. 140.

great treasure which, so the Annals of Fulda tell us, was evidently such a demonstration of power that the great towns and magnates of the Italian kingdom quickly sought to make their peace with the king.³⁴

Fresh from his victory at Bergamo, Arnulf advanced south to Piacenza but, seeing there the exhaustion of his army decided to return north rather than contemplate undertaking a further advance into Tuscany towards Rome.³⁵ His army, however, remained a formidable force and on the journey homewards was directed against Rudolf of Burgundy who, despite the pledges of *homagium* given to Arnulf at Regensburg in late 888, had evidently continued to collaborate with Wido and who sought now to assist him in resisting the king's return to Francia along the principal route north at Ivrea.³⁶ Bypassing there, however, Arnulf and his army took to the St-Bernard pass, ravaged through the heartlands of the Burgundian kingdom and forced Rudolf to flee into the mountains, 'inde conversus per Alpes Penninas Galliam intravit et ad sanctum Mauricium venit. Ruodulfum, quem quaerebat, nocere non potuit, quia montana conscendens in tutissimis locis se absconderat. Regionem inter Iurum et montem Iovis exercitus graviter adtrivit'.³⁷ The 894 campaign had been a magnificent success for Arnulf, but just how did it encourage the idea of a resuscitated *regnum Lotharii*?

³⁴ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 894, 124; Dümmler, *Geschichte*, 375ff.

³⁵ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 894, 124.

³⁶ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 894, 124, 'Quod tunc et firmissimas clausas obseratas desuper posito lapideo castello comes Widonis nomine Ansgar cum satellitibus Rodulfi regis de Burgundia ad hoc transmissis, ne via ibi redeunti regi daretur, obsessum defendebat'. Dümmler, *Geschichte*, 379; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingen*, 124. For Ansgar, E. Hlawitschka, *Franken, Alemannen, Bayern und Burgunder in Oberitalien. Zum Verständnis der fränkischen Königsherrschaft in Italien (774-962)* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1960), 128-9.

³⁷ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 894, 142; *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 894, 124.

There are two likely reasons. We should remember that in the course of his Italian campaign Arnulf advanced as far as Piacenza, and it was there that we should imagine the idea of a re-established *regnum Lotharii* first taking root in the king's mind. For it was at Piacenza that the dead Lothar II had been buried in the summer of 869.³⁸ Unlike Arnulf's own predecessor Charles the Fat, who had provided for the care of Lothar's soul on the occasion of his own arrival at Piacenza in late 880, the king did not issue any diploma for the location of the dead king's tomb, the monastery of SS-Antonine and Victor.³⁹ Nevertheless, members of the Lotharingian dynasty were clearly in the king's thoughts at Piacenza. In a diploma of confirmation issued to the monastery of St-Ambrosius Arnulf actively recalled both the emperor Lothar I and king Louis II of Italy, respectively the father and brother of Lothar II, 'precepta et auctoritates piissimorum augustorum et predecessorum nostrorum, id est dive memorie magni Karoli nec non et gloriosi Hlotharii et filii eius Lodouuici'.⁴⁰ In such circumstances it is very plausible that the idea of the *regnum Lotharii* was current in the king's thoughts. That idea, however, might simply have proven ephemeral had not the additional problem of Rudolf of Burgundy remained unresolved by the king.

There is no doubt that Arnulf must have considered Rudolf to have been all but completely finished in the aftermath of the 894 campaign. As Regino tell us, Arnulf had made Rudolf a fugitive in his own kingdom and had even stopped off at the monastery of St-Maurice d'Agaune, the premier religious site of the kingdom and

³⁸ For the location of the king's tomb at the monastery of SS-Antonine and Victor, *DCharles the Fat*, nr. 40.

³⁹ *DCharles the Fat*, nr. 27.

⁴⁰ *DArnulf*, nr. 123.

the location of Rudolf's first coronation.⁴¹ Although Rudolf remained at large, presumably the reason why Zwentibold was dispatched against him at the head of an Alemannian army in the summer of 894, Arnulf now clearly considered the Burgundian kingdom to be at his disposal.⁴² This would explain why the king evidently thought that he could allocate parts of Rudolf's kingdom to the young Louis of Provence, the son of Boso, at a meeting held at the monastery of Lorsch in the summer of 894; or why, when he finally established Zwentibold as king in 895, he allocated to him both the *regnum Lotharii* and *Burgundia*.⁴³ One result of the 894 campaign then, was that in the eyes of the east Frankish king at least, there was now a political vacuum that needed to be filled. In all likelihood, Arnulf's recent stay at Piacenza had recalled a particular royal tradition which remained fresh in the king's mind. This, alongside the apparent defeat of Rudolf on the same campaign, provides one explanation for the eventual revival of the kingdom. The king's victories in 894 began the process that elevated him into an undisputed position of prominence in the political landscape, and it was from this point in time that the style of his kingship moved onto a more wholly imperial plane. It was this new style of imperial kingship that was trumpeted at the synod of Tribur in May 895, a mere few weeks prior to the coronation of Zwentibold at Worms.⁴⁴ It is certainly plausible, therefore, that one other manifestation of this increasingly imperial trend in the style of his kingship was for Arnulf to sit at the apex of a new order of kings in Europe, as a king over kings. In the aftermath of his victories over Wido and Rudolf, the king set about

⁴¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 894, 142. For the monastery of St-Maurice Zuffery, *Abtei*, especially chapter 2 for the ninth century and 63ff for the early period of the Burgundian kingdom.

⁴² *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 894, 125.

⁴³ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 894, 142 for the grant of 'quasdam civitates cum adiacentibus pagis, quas Ruodulfus tenebat'; *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 895, 126 for the grant to Zwentibold. For Louis of Provence see Poupardin, *Provence*; Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 492-518, and esp. 511.

⁴⁴ C. Carroll, 'The Last Great Carolingian Church Council: the Tribur Synod of 895', *AHC*, xxxiii (2001), 9-25, esp. 20-25.

constructing this new order and used political traditions from the past as replacements for the more recent, non-Carolingian structures that had emerged in the wake of his own assumption of power in 887-8.

Certainly, Arnulf intended to use the Worms assembly as a demonstration of this new imperial style kingship. Like earlier imperial fathers Arnulf crowned his son and despatched him into his newly created *regnum*. It is important to observe, however, that at the same assembly Arnulf had reaffirmed his political relationship with Odo, the king of the western Franks, whom he received and honoured on this occasion as a royal *fidelis*, 'Regale equidem placitum Wormacia habitum est. Ibi Odo rex Galliae ad fidelitatem regis cum muneribus veniens ab eo honorifice susceptus et post paucos dies in sua, prout venerat, placabili licentia reversus est'.⁴⁵ This event, alongside the subsequent coronation of Zwentibold, suggests that Arnulf was deliberately orchestrating the assembly as a demonstration of a new hierarchy of kings in which, clearly, he sat at the head.

Yet, the confident declaration of imperial power staged at Worms in the summer of 895 had almost not taken place. For, the coronation of Zwentibold as king of the *regnum Lotharii* had met with resistance from the very group over which Arnulf had hoped to establish his son. According to Regino, it was in the aftermath of Arnulf's campaign into Italy in 894, that the king had returned to Worms and attempted to establish his son as a king. That attempt, however, met with little enthusiasm, 'Post haec Wormaciam venit: ibi placitum tenuit volens Zuendibolch fil-

⁴⁵ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 895, 126; Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 895, 143, 'In eodem placito Odo rex cum magnis muneribus ad Arnulfum venit, a quo honorifice susceptus est'.

ium suum regno Lotharii preficere; sed minime optimates predicti regni ea vice assensum prebuerunt'.⁴⁶ Regino's emphasis on the wariness of the *optimates predicti regni* [i.e. the *regnum Lotharii*] to accept Zwentibold as their king is striking, and is all the more so given his comments on how Arnulf finally managed to get his own way in the following year, 'Post haec Arnulfus WORMATIAM venit ibique optimatibus ex omnibus regnis suae ditioni subditis sibi occurrentibus conventum publicum celebravit; in quo conventu omnibus assentientibus atque collaudantibus Zuendebolch filium regno Lotharii prefecit'.⁴⁷ In that year, unlike in the previous, Arnulf mobilised support from across the entirety of his kingdom, and in doing so rode roughshod over the small but vocal criticism which had managed to postpone his plans for Zwentibold in 894.

The events of 894 and 895, therefore, provide a useful microcosm of the themes which have hitherto been uncovered in the course of this thesis, and which will be pursued further below. In that first year, the idea of the *regnum Lotharii* was exploited, just as it had been on a number of occasions since 869, in an attempt to give credence to a increasingly imperial style of Carolingian kingship. Yet, the artificiality of that claim was revealed by the absence of any credible audience. Like those earlier appeals to Lothar II's political legacy, made by Hugh and Rudolf I, Arnulf's plans ran up against concerted local opposition. It was only when the full weight of royal authority was brought to bear on this local resistance that Arnulf finally got his way.⁴⁸ From the very beginning of its existence, therefore, the

⁴⁶ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 894, 142.

⁴⁷ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 895, 143.

⁴⁸ The fact of this opposition in 894 deserves comment. Worms had evidently become one of the expected locations of royal-aristocratic meetings in the years after 870 and this is reflected by Arnulf's need to attempt establishing Zwentibold there in 894. It is significant that the king did not attempt to do so at a more obviously 'Lotharingian location', and this suggests that aristocratic associations

resuscitated *regnum Lotharii* was clearly not an expression of a continuing sense of political distinctiveness on the part of its inhabitants. This tension at the very heart of the kingdom's existence had implications which ran through the five years of Zwentibold's reign and these are further discussed below.

4.2: Old Kingdom, New Problems.

For all that Arnulf had evoked the particular traditions of the *regnum Lotharii* as a means of providing his eldest and illegitimate son with royal status, Zwentibold, as will become clear, did not consider his actions to be bound by the limits of historical precedent. Indeed, Zwentibold's initial actions following his coronation at Worms reveal the dichotomy between political tradition and reality at the heart of the resuscitated *regnum Lotharii*.

Zwentibold, having gathered an army from his new lands, set out in the autumn of 895 to lay siege to the western fortress of Laon.⁴⁹ In part, his actions were a response to requests for supporters of the young Charles the Simple for military assistance against King Odo. Yet, as the sources indicate, it was the chance of rich territorial pickings, rather than appeals to the bonds of consanguineity, which lay behind Zwentibold's decision to lay siege to the city; 'At hi qui cum Karolo erant conferunt se ad Zuendebolchum eique partem regni consentiunt, uti veniat et iuvet Karolo suo consobrino. Zuendebolchus vero rex et Karolus cum exercitu veniunt

between this region and the eastern kingdom made such an attempt less than credible. These associations remained strong despite 895 and played a crucial role in the unfolding crises of the reign.

⁴⁹ A rough chronology for the Laon campaign is provided by the dates of diplomas issued by the king. We see him at Trosly-Loire, to the west of Laon, on August 14th and he is back at Trier by October 25, see *Die Urkunden Zwentibolds und Ludwigs des Kinds*, ed. T. Schieffer, *MGH Diplomata regum*

Laudunumque obsidione cingunt'.⁵⁰ Indeed, it was clearly the arrival of what was thought to be a new royal lord that encouraged some of the western king's counts to now offer their allegiance to Zwentibold.⁵¹

Yet, in the end, Zwentibold's plans for an enlarged kingdom to the west came to nothing. Charles' supporters, alarmed perhaps by the recent defections, pushed for a negotiated settlement to their hostilities with Odo, rather than risk their own king's position in an unpredictable alliance with Zwentibold. According to the *Annales Vedastini*, some were even concerned for the physical welfare of the king himself, 'Hi vero qui cum Karolo erant videntes se imminui et, ut ferunt, quia Zuendebolchus cum suis Karolum privari vitam cogitabant, ab ipsa obsidione legatos Odonem mittunt, ut partem regni, qualemcumque ei placuerit, Karolo et eis consentiat atque in pace recipiat'.⁵² Despite Zwentibold's failure to take the city, his attempt provides a crucial opportunity to investigate the nature of the kingdom which had been provided for him by his father. For although Arnulf had successfully evoked the memory of the *regnum Lotharii* at Worms, it remained to be seen just how viable such an idea was as the structural framework through which Zwentibold could exercise his newly acquired royal prerogatives. As will become clear, Arnulf's successful evocation of the *regnum Lotharii* in 895 was not matched by the full reestablishment of the means of royal rule as it had existed in the days of Lothar II and which, as we shall see, was simply not possible by the final years of the ninth century. The nature of royal rule

Germaniae ex stirpe Karolinorum (Berlin, 1960), [hereafter, *DZwentibold* or *DLouis the Child*], nrs. 3, 4.

⁵⁰ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 895, 76; Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 895, 143, 'Eodem anno Zuendibolch collecto immenso exercitu cupiens amplificare terminos regni sui quasi Carolo adversus Odonem auxilium laturus Lugdunum Clavatum venit et civitatem obsidione cinxit'; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 137-9.

⁵¹ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 895, 76.

⁵² *Annales Vedastini*, a. 895, 76.

under Lothar II had by then passed into obsolescence and for all that Zwentibold's own kingship was partly legitimated through such political connections, his own *regnum* was, in effect, a new and different type of polity.

In the remainder of this section I will explore some of these differences. I will argue that although the historian is confronted with the same political terminology in the sources to describe the kingdoms of Lothar II and Zwentibold, the changelessness of that terminology in fact conceals fundamental differences. This, I argue, is further evidence that the *regnum Lotharii* did not maintain itself as a permanent feature of the political landscape in the last third of the ninth century.

The debate over the precise nature of this polity has tended to focus on whether it conforms to a style reminiscent of a traditional Carolingian subkingdom, or whether it ought to be considered as a fully independent political unit in its own right.⁵³ Although Arnulf, like any early medieval *paterfamilias*, could seek to intervene in the internal affairs of his son's *regnum*, the sheer scale of the powers awarded to Zwentibold in the summer of 895 strongly argues in favour of the new king's independence from his father.

Almost immediately upon the occasion of his establishment at Worms, Zwentibold began to issue diplomas in his own name.⁵⁴ These documents, of which 28 survive from the reign, reveal to us the full panoply of royal powers assumed by the new king: he issued confirmations of rights granted by his royal predecessors; he

⁵³ Schieffer, 'Kanzlei', 27; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingen*, 159-161; Kasten, *Königssöhne*, 554-7 all conclude that the kingdom was fully independent. W. Mohr, 'Imperium Lothariensium', *Jahrbuch für westdeutsche Landesgeschichte*, xiii (1987), 1-42 argues that the kingdom was of a traditional sub-regnal type.

was able to freely dispose of what fiscland, *beneficia* and monastic lands he possessed; and he had unlimited control over the disposition of economic and legal privileges.⁵⁵ As Brigitte Kasten has pointed out, the range of powers made available to Zwentibold was a new departure in the provisioning of royal sons by east Frankish kings.⁵⁶ Certainly, Louis the German had not permitted his own sons to possess such a range of authority. Yet, unlike Zwentibold, they had not been established as fully fledged kings. Zwentibold, on the other hand, was proclaimed as *REX* not only on the seals of his own diplomas, but upon the coinage which was minted in his own name and in the private charters issued by monastic *scriptoria* from across his kingdom.⁵⁷ Moreover, the Sacramentary of Echternach, which was composed at some point between the years 895-900, recorded the daily masses that were to be sung for the virtuous, wise and judicious Zwentibold, and confirms the impression that he possessed the full dignity of a Carolingian king.⁵⁸

Yet, even if the question over the status of the kingdom established in 895 is now effectively resolved, that of its exact nature needs refinement. For, even if Zwentibold possessed the full dignity of a Carolingian king and a territory defined by the historical precedent of the *regnum Lotharii*, the new kingdom was in fact territorially smaller than that which had been ruled earlier in the century by Lothar II.⁵⁹ The Annals of Fulda recorded that Zwentibold was established in both the *regn-*

⁵⁴ *DZwentibold*, nr. 1.

⁵⁵ Kasten, *Königssöhne*, 551-2 provides a convenient description of the king's powers based on his surviving diplomas.

⁵⁶ Kasten, *Königssöhne*, 552; MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 85-86; Hartman, *Ludwig der Deutsche*, 66-76.

⁵⁷ *Stavelot*, nr. 46, dated, 'anno II regnante Zuenteboldo rege Francorum'; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 159; Kasten, *Königssöhne*, 550; G. Depeyrot, *Le numéraire Carolingien: Corpus des monnaies* (Wetteren, 1998), 49.

⁵⁸ Y. Hen, ed. *The Sacramentary of Echternach* (Woodbridge, 1996), nrs. 2094, 2098, 2102.

⁵⁹ See map 5 which also locates the locations of Zwentibold's itinerary.

um Lotharii and in *Burgundia* in 895, both areas, of course, which had formed the original *regnum Lotharii*.⁶⁰ But, Rudolf I remained secure in his Burgundian kingdom to the south, and continued to do so throughout the years of Zwentibold's reign, while to the north, Frisia seems to have remained in the hands of the emperor.⁶¹ In addition, a fundamental shift in the practice of ruling that territory is detected. Even though the lineaments of power remained common throughout the whole period of the middle ages, that is the role of the *iter*, the fisc and the demands made on the church, the evidence does suggest that Zwentibold operated in a political landscape where his access to the material of rule was much less secure, and less consistent, than it had been in an earlier part of the century.

It is a commonplace that the royal itinerary in the middle ages was 'the most essential institution' because of the cohesion that a constantly moving royal presence could give to political society.⁶² These comments need some modification when thinking about the ninth century Carolingians. Unlike their Ottonian successors in the east, Carolingian kings did not need to be constantly in the saddle.⁶³ Rather, they patrolled relatively limited areas of royal heartland from a series of favoured palaces around, and to which, the political community revolved.⁶⁴ Lothar II had resided chiefly in the great palaces of Aachen, Gondreville and Thionville and relied rarely upon the hospitality of the *civitates*, and even less on that of royal monasteries.⁶⁵ In short, Carolingian kings tended to reside on their rural and suburban palatial

⁶⁰ *Annales Fuldenses* (B), 895, 126.

⁶¹ Parisot, *Lorraine*, 519-20; Schieffer, 'Kanzlei', 27.

⁶² K. Leyser, 'Ottonian Government', *EHR*, xcvi (1981), 721-753 at 746-747.

⁶³ Airlie, 'The Palace of Memory', 2.

⁶⁴ The classic study, albeit for a later period, is Müller-Mertens, *Die Reichsstruktur im Spiegel der Herrschaftspraxis Ottos des Großen*.

⁶⁵ Brühl, *Fodrum*, 31-34.

estates.⁶⁶ Yet, as Brühl pointed out over thirty years ago, Zwentibold's itinerary actually runs against the grain of this traditional picture.⁶⁷ A clear example of this difference can be seen in the king's attitude towards Aachen. From Charlemagne to Lothar II the palace had been a favoured royal residence but the evidence suggests that by Zwentibold's reign it had suffered a neglect of sorts with only two recorded stays.⁶⁸ Aachen, in other words, and as Janet Nelson has recently pointed out, was no longer a central place of power by the late ninth century.⁶⁹ This is not to say, of course, that Aachen had lost something of its force on the imagination of contemporary observers. For both Regino in Francia and Andrew of Bergamo in Italy the palace remained, alongside Frankfurt, a *sedes regia*; and for Zwentibold himself it was one of only a handful of locations whose status was designated explicitly as *palatium*.⁷⁰ But, *palatia* do not dominate the royal residences as they had under Lothar II.

Some interpretative care is required and here the work of Thomas Zotz is important. Zotz reminds us that in the late ninth century the idea of the palace as the political, social and moral heart of the kingdom remained strong and that it is necessary to account, therefore, for the interchangeability of terms for describing the status of royal residences.⁷¹ Kings might have stayed at a variety of places

⁶⁶ Yet, compare J. L. Nelson, 'Charles the Bald and the Church in town and countryside', *SCH*, xvi (1979), 103-18 and reprinted in her *Politics and Ritual*, 75-90, at 84, for that king's increasing reliance upon the *civitates* and monasteries of his own kingdom.

⁶⁷ Brühl, *Fodrum*, 39.

⁶⁸ *DZwentibold*, nrs. 11, 19-21.

⁶⁹ J. L. Nelson, 'Aachen as a place of power', in *Topographies of Power*, 217-242 and her 'Alfred's Carolingian contemporaries', in *Alfred the Great*, ed. Reuter, 293-310, at 300.

⁷⁰ Nijmegen: *DZwentibold*, nrs. 9 and 10; Aachen: nr. 11, 19-21; Flörchingen: nr. 23.

⁷¹ *DCharles the Simple*, nrs. 66, 72, 73, 74, 76, 78. T. Zotz, 'Palatium publicum, nostrum, regium. Bemerkungen zur Königspfalz in der Karolingerzeit', F. Staab, ed. *Die Pfalz: Probleme einer Begriffsgeschichte vom Kaiserpalast auf dem Palatin bis zum heutigen Regierungsbezirk* (Speyer, 1990), 71-99. See also his, 'Carolingian Tradition and Ottonian-Salian Innovation. Comparative

designated as *palatia*, *villae* or *curtes* but it is still possible to speak of them as palaces in a sociological and political sense.

When the overall picture of Zwentibold's reign is considered *palatia* do not dominate the residences of the king in the way that they had under Lothar II. Of the 28 surviving diplomas issued by Zwentibold, seven were issued from one of three locations explicitly designated as *palatia*: Aachen, Nijmegen and Flörchingen. Just as prominent in the diplomas as places of royal residence, however, are the *civitates*, above all Trier but also Strasbourg and Toul.⁷² Trier served as Zwentibold's main residence, and this as we shall see was due to the king's possession of the monastery of St. Maximin from 896 and the support of Archbishop Ratbod, who became his archchancellor. By the same token, Zwentibold's reliance on monastic hospitality seems more necessary than it had been for Lothar II and the king is found in residence at the Prüm dependency of St-Goar, the female house of Nivelles, St-Evre near Toul, and even at the Saxon monastery of Essen.⁷³

The remaining diplomas reveal that the king could count on finding residence at a series of designated *villae* (Amberloup, Vilvorde, Audun-le-Roman), fiscland (Paliseul), or undesignated estates (Schweighausen, Heroluesheim, Diest).⁷⁴ In total these account for a full third of the residences from which Zwentibold issued royal diplomas. Again, Zotz's observation that these terms could be used interchangeably ought to be borne in mind, and the diplomas do provide an example. On May 3rd 896

Observations on Palatine Policy in the Empire', in A. Duggan, *Kings and Kingship in Medieval Europe* (London, 1993), 69–100.

⁷² Trier: *DZwentibold*, nrs. 4, 5, 18, 26, 26; Strasbourg: nr. 6; Toul: nr. 17.

⁷³ St-Goar: *DZwentibold*, nr. 2; Essen: nr. 22; Nivelles: nr. 16.

⁷⁴ Amberloup: *DZwentibold*, nr. 24; Vilvorde: nr. 15; Audun-le-Roman: nr. 24; Paliseul: nr. 13; Schweighausen: nr. 7; Heroluesheim: nr. 14; Diest: nr. 28.

a diploma was issued to a certain Everhelm and was drawn up at the *curtis regia* of Flörchingen.⁷⁵ This same location, near the palace of Thionville, was later designated a *palatium* in a diploma of October 3rd of the same year by which Bishop Dodilo of Cambrai received the *villa* of Ligny from the king.⁷⁶ Yet, even bearing this in mind, Zotz's explanation is not completely convincing when applied to many of the estates at which Zwentibold resided in the course of his reign.

The most striking aspect of many of those properties at which Zwentibold resided during his reign (Heroluesheim, Vilvorde, Audun-le-Roman and Diest) are their novelty as locations of royal residence. These were locations at which no previous Carolingian king ever resided, nor indeed were they sites to which later kings would return. The *villa* of Amberloup, where Zwentibold was on November 11th 896, and the *fiscus* of Paliseul, from where he issued a diploma in late January 897, provide an indication of the type of estate upon which the king found residence.⁷⁷ Earlier, on June 13th 888, Arnulf had issued a diploma for the chapel of St-Mary at Aachen in which rents from 43 named *villae* previously granted by Lothar II were confirmed in the possession of the chapel.⁷⁸ These revenues were sequestered from *villae* that numbered amongst them Amberloup and Paliseul.⁷⁹ The impression is that these estates were essentially and primarily the economic units which had long formed the vast bulk of the Carolingian fisc, and which had provided

⁷⁵ *DZwentibold*, nr. 8.

⁷⁶ *DZwentibold*, nr. 23.

⁷⁷ *DZwentibold*, nrs. 12 and 13.

⁷⁸ Lothar's diploma is now lost but was subsequently confirmed by Arnulf in 888 and Zwentibold in 890 see *DArnulf*, nr. 31 and *DZwentibold*, nr. 11. Commentary on this diploma can be found in D. Flach, *Untersuchungen zur Verfassung und Verwaltung des Aachener Reichsgutes von der Karlingerzeit bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen, 1976), 92f.

⁷⁹ *DArnulf*, nr. 31.

the base upon which the superstructure of the great Carolingian palace-complexes like Aachen had been built.

These were lands that belonged to the fisc. Indeed, Amberloup and Paliseul were located in a region of the middle Meuse which included old Carolingian lands like Longlier, Douzy, Mouzon and Stenay. Flörchingen and Audun-le-Roman were located close to Gondreville and to Metz; while the lands at Schweighausen and at Diest lay in a landscape dominated by Liège, Nivelles, Lobbes, Herstal and Jupille. They were Carolingian heartlands. They were also economically productive estates. Although Bastogne was not itself a recorded residence, it does provide an example of continuing economic robustness in the region. Bastogne, like Amberloup and Paliseul, was one of the 43 named *villae* which had granted by Lothar II to the community of St-Mary at Aachen and it was located only a short distance to the east of these two *villae*.⁸⁰ Charles the Fat had permitted market rights there in 884 and it was also the site of a mint.⁸¹ A surviving coin bearing the name of Charles the Bald was inscribed with the legend HIN FISCO BASTONIA.⁸² It seems that Zwentibold was residing on old Carolingian estates, which were, in all likelihood, economically productive in the late ninth century. What is surprising is that we should see a king residing in such locations.⁸³

The peculiarity of this state of affairs was a question for which Brühl did not

⁸⁰ *DLothar II*, nr. 43.

⁸¹ *DCharles the Fat*, nr. 109.

⁸² U. Nonn, *Pagus und Comitatus in Niederlothringen* (Bonn, 1983), 156 at n. 911.

⁸³ R. Samson, 'Carolingian Palaces and the Poverty of Ideology', in M. Locock, ed. *Meaningful Architecture: Social Interpretations of Buildings* (Avesbury, 1994), 99–131, in which appear on Samson's list of palaces those of Aachen, Nimwegen and Flörchingen but not locations like Paliseul, Amberloup or indeed Bastogne.

provide an answer and it is one that certainly needs a more focused investigation than the lamentably brief one provided here. One fruitful investigation towards answering this question would be to ask, to what extent the Viking assaults in the late 870s and early 880s disrupted the provisioning of the traditional palatial estates? The most famous example, of course, remains the stabling of horses by the Vikings in the Aachen chapel, and this may suggest a general disruption of the structures put in place for the provisioning of the court at such locations.⁸⁴ I have shown here, however, that despite the persistence of the term *regnum Lotharii* and its application to the kingdoms of both Lothar II and Zwentibold, we are in fact dealing with two different political structures.

There remains one other change in the nature of the kingdom that needs a brief discussion here. Zwentibold did not exercise control over all of the royal monasteries of his kingdom. A suitable place to start this discussion is to remind us of Brühl's observation that Lothar II resided only rarely in the monasteries of his kingdom. We do see him however, on occasion, at the monasteries of St-Avold, Prüm and St-Mihiel.⁸⁵ Zwentibold, however, relied on monastic hospitality to a far greater extent. His diplomas reveal to us that he stayed at the Prüm dependency of St-Goar, the female house of Nivelles, and at St-Evre where he celebrated Christmas of 897.⁸⁶ Following his successful acquisition of St-Maximin in 896 we would also expect him to have resided there. In most respects, of course, the nature of the relationship between the king and the monasteries of his kingdom had not changed since the days of Lothar II and before. They continued to provide hospitality for the

⁸⁴ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 881, 97.

⁸⁵ Brühl, *Fodrum*, 32.

⁸⁶ *DZwentibold*, nrs. 2, 16.

king; he could extract services from those under royal protection, the most significant being the contributions to the royal army that monasteries could make; being rich in lands they could be used as *honores* to reward faithful servants; they provided commemorative functions and prayers for both living and dead members of the royal family; ultimately they were, as Matthew Innes has pointed out, the conduits through which royal government could enter and influence the localities.⁸⁷ This was a relationship that essentially continued unaltered into the reign of Zwentibold.⁸⁸ On June 13th 897, for example, in a diploma issued to St-Maximin, Zwentibold re-imposed the right of the king to extract a *servitium* from the landed endowment of the monastery, a demand that had not been made by Arnulf in 888 and which would not later be made by Charles the Simple after 911.⁸⁹

Nevertheless, the distinct impression remains that Zwentibold's access to the monastic possessions of his kingdom was characterised by fierce competition between himself and the aristocratic figures who had come to enjoy possession of these institutions. This is a theme to which we will return in the remaining sections of the thesis but it is worth pointing out here the real difficulties that Zwentibold faced in gaining access to these valuable units of economic wealth and political significance. As Matthew Innes has so effectively demonstrated, royal monasteries were one of the most important conduits through which kings gained access to the regional aristocratic networks that made up local political society in the early middle ages.⁹⁰ Prüm was perhaps the greatest royal monastery in Lotharingia but here, at the

⁸⁷ Innes, *State and Society*, 47f.

⁸⁸ Stavelot: *DZwentibold*, nrs. 1, 12; Süstern: 2; St-Mihiel: 3; Echternach: 5; Inden: 8; St-Maximin: 14; Nivelles: 16; St-Evre: 17; Werden: 19; Prüm: 25; Munstereifel: 26.

⁸⁹ *DZwentibold*, nr. 14.

⁹⁰ M. Innes, 'Kings, Monks and Patrons: political identities and the abbey of Lorsch', in R. Le Jan, ed. *La Royauté et les Élités*, 301-324 and his *State and Society*, 94-140.

close of the ninth century, the regularly elected abbot, Regino, was deposed and replaced by a member of the powerful Matfridinger family, Richar.⁹¹ This, effectively, was a loss to the crown of one of its main monastic supports and it serves as an effective example to the changed political situation in which Zwentibold had to attempt the construction of a viable kingship.

4.3: Towards an aristocratic community?

For all his efforts to create a viable kingship, Zwentibold failed. The death of Arnulf in December 899 was followed in quick succession by the coronation of his young legitimate son Louis by the magnates of the eastern kingdom, and his acceptance thereafter by a significant part of the aristocracy of Zwentibold's kingdom, 'Certatim igitur ad Ludowicum transeunt eumque in regnum introducunt et in Theodonis villa manibus datis eius dominatione se subiciunt'.⁹² Zwentibold, meanwhile, was killed in battle against the forces of his erstwhile rivals, counts Stephen, Gerard and Matfrid.⁹³ At first glance, the events of 899/900 appear as a straightforward reassertion of east-Frankish dominance over the *regnum Lotharii*. Further investigation of the king's overthrow, however, actually reveals a developed sense of political self-awareness and concern for protection from a major portion of Zwentibold's aristocracy. I will argue in this section that this is of significant importance in the eventual emergence of a distinct political community in Lotharingia. We should remind ourselves that the thrust of this thesis, hitherto, has

⁹¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 899, 147.

⁹² Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 900, 148.

⁹³ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 900, 148.

argued that such a politically distinct aristocratic community did not exist in Lotharingia in the years following the division of Lothar's kingdom in 870.

The reign of Zwentibold, therefore, takes on a crucial importance in providing one of the stages upon which the politically active Lotharingians of Flodoard's *Annales* emerged onto the map of Frankish politics. Essentially, I will argue in this section that the significance of Zwentibold's reign was that it began the process by which the divergent aristocracies of the old middle kingdom, that is the easterners who were successfully incorporated into the kingdom of Louis the German from 870 and the westerners whom we saw earlier trying to opt out of the Ribemont agreement in 882, actually came to think of themselves as together forming a distinct political community separate from both the eastern and western kingdoms. In the remainder of this chapter I will begin the exploration of this process and will argue that the initial moment of political self-awareness - the moment effectively in which a Lotharingian aristocracy was brought into being for the first time since the reign of Lothar II - was in a desperate need of one particular aristocratic community to protect themselves against the rapacious and unpredictable King Zwentibold.

The threatened aristocratic community was that which inhabited the Moselle valley and was essentially the region that had fallen to Louis the German at Meerssen in 870. The point needs some refinement. It is not suggested here that this aristocracy, whose contours will be outlined further below, was a closed and insular regional system. Certainly, in the sense that its members shared common concerns and competed with one another for local political leadership, this aristocracy can be described as a community, but it was one whose political horizons continued to

operate on a broader regional level and which had long come to expect engagement with the king at the great royal sites along the middle Rhine and Main.⁹⁴ This was a regional aristocracy plugged into the eastern kingdom.⁹⁵ Matthew Innes recently argued that it was the aristocracy's desire to protect their access to wider regional networks that brought them into open conflict with Zwentibold who, desperate to create a royal landscape of his own, threatened their position through unexpected and unpredictable royal aggression.⁹⁶ This of course remains eminently correct, but I will add a further dimension to the picture.

For all that the events of 900 were about reconnecting with a wider regional political world, the net result of the conflict with Zwentibold was the emergence of a distinctly politicised regional aristocracy whose members, faced with immense royal aggression on the part of the king and the absence of any meaningful intervention on the part of the emperor Arnulf, necessarily turned inwards in common protection of their own interests and position. In essence, this aristocratic community became, for the first time in 900, a 'polity' that pursued the common political objective of reconnecting with wider regional aristocratic and royal topographies.

It should be emphasised again that no argument is being made here for the emergence of a closed aristocratic network. The men responsible for engineering the advance of Louis the Child to Thionville in 900 did so because they wanted to safeguard their access to trans-regional political networks, and the cohesion which they demonstrated in that year was always liable to deteriorate again into fierce

⁹⁴ S. Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in western Europe, 900-1300* (Oxford, 1984, reprinted 1997), 1-11.

⁹⁵ Innes, *State and Society*, 225.

⁹⁶ Innes, *State and Society*, 225-229.

competition and open conflict. It was in a sense simply an *ad hoc* politicisation. But the negotiations which took place to engineer Louis' reception in Lotharingia were necessarily conducted as a dialogue between two distinct political communities so as to offer guarantees to those who had suffered under Zwentibold that that their traditional positions and expectations were safe under a new royal lord. I argue that it was this initial dialogue, conducted in terms of political distinction, which set the pattern for all subsequent royal access to Lotharingia in the reign of Louis the Child. The events of 899-900 represent a crucial development in the move towards the emergence for the first time since the death of Lothar II of a genuine political regnal aristocracy in Lotharingia. The submission made to Louis the Child at Thionville in 900 was clearly the action of a politicised section of the aristocracy. This aristocracy however had not always been so assertive in the pursuit of common political objectives, and the remainder of this chapter will seek to uncover the processes by which this community came to be endowed with a degree of political self-awareness.

The recent work of Simon MacLean has revealed some of the processes which could bring about the formation of a distinct aristocratic community.⁹⁷ His excellent discussion of Charles the Fat's patronage network centred on the royal estate of Corteolona near Pavia shows how the emperor could construct an Italian support network based on royal service, the physical proximity of its members to one another and the ruler, and participation in the hunt.⁹⁸ Bavaria's political élite too was a distinct and self-contained group with which the emperor could do business.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 81-122.

⁹⁸ MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 93-6.

⁹⁹ G. Bühner-Thierry, 'Les évêques des Bavière et d'Alémanie dans l'entourage des derniers rois carolingiens en Germanie (876-911)', *Francia*, xvi (1989), 31-52; MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 98-99.

It is MacLean's investigation of the political networks that underpinned the emperor's authority in west Francia, however, which is of most use for our purposes. There existed a political network in that region whose members – men like Odo of Paris, Gauzlin of St-Denis and Theoderic of Vermandois – were bound together in common service, close geographical proximity and kinship.¹⁰⁰ These were men whose coherence as a group had initially been recognised by Charles the Bald, and whose power and unity of purpose was reflected in their continuing corporate role in the successions of Carloman II, Charles the Fat and Odo. To all intents and purposes, it is possible to talk here of a Neustrian aristocratic community which could act together in a common endeavour and as a representative of a particular *regnum*.

A route into uncovering the composition of this community is provided by some circumstantial evidence from Regino of Prüm. His narrative records that it was at St-Goar that the secret meeting between Zwentibold's enemies took place, and that it was then at the palace of Thionville that the young Louis was acknowledged by his Lotharingian supporters.¹⁰¹ Although Regino does not record the names of the Lotharingians who participated at these events, both of these locations strongly suggest that it was the Matfridinger counts Gerard and Matfrid who sat at the heart of the opposition to Zwentibold. St-Goar was a daughter house of the great royal monastery of Prüm where the Matfridinger were engineering at precisely this moment the establishment of their own brother Richar as abbot, while Thionville,

¹⁰⁰ MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, 99-122, especially 102-109.

¹⁰¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 899, 147; 900, 148.

situated on the Moselle between Trier and Metz, lay at the very heart of Matfridinger landed power.¹⁰²

The Matfridinger were a powerful aristocratic family whose inherited properties were concentrated in the middle Moselle valley around Metz but whose lands stretched east into the Blies- and Speyergau, and north into the Eifel around Trier.¹⁰³ This extensive landed wealth was augmented by their possession of a series of monastic *honores* across the region and which by the time of Zwentibold's establishment included the monasteries of St-Peter at Metz, the female house of Oeren, and St-Maximin at Trier.¹⁰⁴ The bonds of kinship served to extend Matfridinger influence further across the region. They were clearly heavily involved at the monastery of St-Evre near Toul where an *abbas* Stephen was in control by the early 890s.¹⁰⁵ This Stephen, who was also abbot of St-Mihiel near Verdun, was later described in a diploma of Louis the Child as a close relation (*proximus affinus*) of Count Gerard, and it may be that we are dealing here with another brother of the Matfridinger counts.¹⁰⁶ This is certainly the implication of a later forged diploma of King Arnulf which described how the brothers Stephen, Gerard and Matfrid seized lands from St-Evre.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² For Richar at Prüm: Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 899, 147; *Annales Prumienses*, a. 899, 82. For his consanguinity with Gerard and Matfrid, Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 892, 139.

¹⁰³ For the family see Parisot, *Lorraine*, 500ff; Poupardin, *Provence*, 299f; Hlawitschka, *Anfänge*, 154-71. For their landed position by our period see id., *Lotharingien*, 166-168 and n. 29; Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 574.

¹⁰⁴ For their possession of St-Maximin, *Libellus de rebus Treverensibus*, cc. 13-14, 104; Parisse, 'Noblesse', 176; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 196; Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 574.

¹⁰⁵ *DArnulf*, nr. 89. The title *abbas* was applied to Stephen in *DZwentibold*, nr. 8. For Stephen: Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 122-23.

¹⁰⁶ *DLouis the Child*, nr. 57.

¹⁰⁷ *DArnulf*, nr. 188.

Other kin members helped to project Matfridinger influence across the region. Count Matfrid was married to the sister of Bishop Dado of Verdun (880-922), and it was certainly this alliance with the local ecclesiastical power which allowed the count to deploy his influence in the region around Verdun, and which made him an evidently attractive patron for the local aristocracy.¹⁰⁸ He appears as a witness to a charter recording a donation of lands to the monastery of St-Vanne near Verdun made by a certain Hildebertus in 882.¹⁰⁹ We have already seen how another Matfridinger brother Richar was established in the place of Regino as abbot of Prüm in 899. This change would certainly almost have not succeeded without a significant degree of support from within the monastery itself, and it is indicative of a likely Matfridinger faction within the community that a Matfrid had earlier appeared as both a presbyter and *prepositus* in two Prüm charters from the 880s, and that known followers of the family, such as Otbert, were benefactors of the monastery in their own right.¹¹⁰ In the light of the observations made earlier about the reduced material of rule which Zwentibold encountered upon his establishment in 895, entrenched aristocrats like the Matfridinger, with their extensive inherited lands and their possession of monasteries and kin across the region, provided a formidable barrier to the construction of an effective and viable royal landscape.

The Matfridinger were associated with another powerful aristocratic family possessed of a significant presence in the Moselle valley and which was led by a

¹⁰⁸ Hlawitschka, *Anfänge*, 71-78; Althoff, *Amicitiae*, 210f.

¹⁰⁹ Parisot, *Lorraine*, 764f.

¹¹⁰ Beyer, *UBMR*, nrs. 98, 104, 120; W. Haubrichs, *Die Kultur der Abtei Prüm zur Karolingerzeit* (Bonn, 1979), 50-51. For Prüm in the late ninth century and early tenth, E. Wisplinghoff, 'Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Klosters Prüm an der Wende vom 9. zum 10. Jahrhundert', *DA*, lv (1999), 439ff.

Count Megingoz until his murder by rivals in 892.¹¹¹ Megingoz held both a county in the Mayenfeldgau and the great monastery of St-Maximin which he had received from King Arnulf in 888 and which would later pass to the Matfridinger in 892. The king's generosity towards Megingoz was led by purely political concerns. The count was a relation (*nepos*) of the new western king Odo and this, alongside his own family's deep roots in the middle Rhine and Main, made him a safe pair of hands into which Arnulf could effectively delegate control of a crucial region far from his own heartlands in Bavaria.¹¹² His brother Robert was count of the eastern *pagus* of the Nahegau and had also been awarded the monastery of Echternach.¹¹³ Other kin members of the family included count Stephen of the Bitgau and his brother Walaho, the count of Worms.¹¹⁴ These brothers possessed the monasteries of Rettel near Metz, where Megingoz was to be murdered in 892, and both Tholey and Mettlach in the environs of Trier.¹¹⁵ The coincidence of the name Stephen with its appearance as a moniker within the ranks of the Matfridinger suggests a certain degree of kinship between the two families which owing to the unfortunate silence of the sources can not be pursued any further. They were nevertheless closely allied with one another and consistently provided the major opposition to Zwentibold during his reign.¹¹⁶

The Matfridinger and the kin-network centred initially on Megingoz were the

¹¹¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 892, 140.

¹¹² For the relationship of Megingoz to Odo, Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 892, 140.

¹¹³ H.-H. Anton, *Trier im frühen Mittelalter* (Paderborn, 1987), 175; E. Ewig, 'Das Trierer Land im Merowinger- und Karolingerreich', in R. Laufner, ed. *Geschichte des Trierer Landes* (Trier, 1964), 222-302., 286, 292; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 110-111; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 182f.

¹¹⁴ For the fraternal relationship, Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 901, 149. For their possessions: *DZwentibold*, nr. 5, 'in pago Piatahgeuue in comitatu Stefani comitis'; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 165f.

¹¹⁵ Parisse, 'Noblesse et Monastères', 176.

¹¹⁶ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 897, 144 and a. 900, 148. For the circle of aristocrats associated with Megingoz, including a *Stefanus* and *Girat*, see *Remiremont*, fol. 6v, entry 8; Althoff, *Amicitiae*, 219-223.

major figures of an aristocratic community which dominated the Moselle valley, and whose members were bound together either through the bonds of kinship itself, their possession of *honores* in close proximity to one another in the dioceses of Trier and Metz, or through common links to particular monastic sites. This did not mean however that it was a closed regional network with an internal equilibrium. Rather, this was an aristocracy whose members were liable to explode into open conflict, or whose loyalty could easily be attracted elsewhere.

This is graphically demonstrated by the feud which exploded within the ranks of the aristocracy in August 892 when Count Megingoz was murdered by Count Alberich and his *socii* at the monastery of Rettel.¹¹⁷ As Innes has pointed out, Alberich's desperate resort to murder was a symptom of new power relations established by Arnulf in Lotharingia that placed control over access to the pool of royal patronage into the hands of Megingoz.¹¹⁸ It is striking how far the feud represented a conflict between members of one aristocratic community. Like the Matfridinger, Alberich's family possessed close relations with the monastery of Prüm.¹¹⁹ His elder brother Heriric granted lands to the monastery in 868 and another brother, Hunfrid, had been a monk before becoming bishop of Thérouanne in the western kingdom.¹²⁰ It was none other than Count Megingoz who stood surety to Heriric's grant in 868, while the benefactor himself had once been a vassal of the Matfridinger Adalhard of Metz.¹²¹ The family of Alberich were closely associated to

¹¹⁷ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 892, 140.

¹¹⁸ Innes, *State and Society*, 225-230.

¹¹⁹ *DLothar I*, nr. 137 (855), for a grant of lands to Prüm which had been held by his vassal Alberich; *UBMR*, nr. 89; Haubrichs, *Prüm*, 37; L. Kuchenbuch, *Bäuerliche Gesellschaft und Klosterherrschaft im 9. Jahrhundert: Studien zur Sozialstruktur der Familia der Abtei Prüm* (Wiesbaden, 1978), 349-50.

¹²⁰ *UBMR*, nr. 110.

¹²¹ Megingoz: *UBMR*, nr. 110, 'actum in uuimundasheim publice. XII. Kal. septembris firmatumque legaliter ansbaldo abbate presente ac megengaudo comite pagensi proceribusque ac scabinis

the aristocratic figures already discussed. They were all members of the same aristocratic community bound by ties of kinship, proximity and monastic endowment. Yet, as Megingoz's murder demonstrates, this was an aristocracy community with little sense of internal regulation. Competition within its ranks could explode into outright conflict, and loyalties could be attracted elsewhere.

This is a theme demonstrated by the position of Archbishop Ratbod of Trier (884-915).¹²² Although Ratbod's origins were in Alemannia, his establishment at Trier in 884 placed him at the very heart of the aristocratic community that we have been describing. His relationship with the local aristocracy, however, was often strained. Ratbod had arrived at Trier in the aftermath of the Viking assault upon the city in 882 and his priority was always to restore the position and primacy of his church. To this end Ratbod began to cultivate the production of texts and music at Trier, but at a more fundamental level it meant reasserting episcopal control over wayward monasteries.¹²³ These monasteries included some of those that we have already seen in the hands of the local aristocracy. The monastery of Mettlach, for example, was an old possession of Trier but was held by Count Stephen.¹²⁴ Echternach, another old possession, was in the hands of Count Robert in the early 890s. Megingoz had custody of the great house of St-Maximin and here the Matfridinger would succeed. In addition, they possessed the female house of Oeren.

pagensibus'. Relationship with the Matfridinger: *DLothar I*, nr. 128 (853), for a grant of *mancipia* to Heriric, 'ex beneficio Adalardi fidelissimi comitis nostri'; Wisplinghoff, 'Prüm', 446, and n.32.

¹²² For Ratbod's relationship with Zwentibold, F. Gause, 'Zwentibolds Verhältnis zu den lothringischen Grossen Erzbischof Radbod und Graf Reginar', *AHVNR*, cix (1926), 144-155.

¹²³ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 882, 119.

¹²⁴ Boshof, 'Kloster und Bischof', 217; Parisse, 'Noblesse et Monastères', 176.

Ratbod was not always fondly remembered at the monastic sites under his control. At Mettlach the *Miracula Liutwini* referred to him as *pontifex, rector et predo*, but this accusation serves only to highlight the vigour with which the archbishop sought to re-establish control over the lost possessions of his church.¹²⁵ Indeed, we should not lose sight of the fact that this always remained Ratbod's priority, and it offers an explanation for his continuing support of Zwentibold during a period when the king was otherwise turning his attention towards destroying the entrenched power of the very aristocracy which we have been discussing and in which Ratbod possessed a prominent position.

The entrenched position of the local aristocracy of the middle Moselle presented Zwentibold with a formidable barrier to the construction of a viable royal landscape of his own in the years after 895.¹²⁶ The king, however, soon determined upon breaking this entrenched power and in 896 he moved against Stephen and his allies by dispossessing them of their *honores et dignitates*.¹²⁷ Regino records how the Matfridinger lost both the monastery of St-Peter at Metz and Oeren at Trier, but it is clear that they also lost their hold upon St-Maximin.¹²⁸ Later tradition recorded that Ratbod claimed Oeren, and it is likely that he also improved his relationship with the community at St-Maximin where he presided over the exhumation of the abbey's patron saint in 898.¹²⁹ Zwentibold, therefore, was able to exploit the naturally existing rivalries from within the ranks of the local aristocracy in the construction of

¹²⁵ *Miracula Liutwini episcopi Treverensis*, part ed. H. V. Sauerland, *MGH SS*, xv/2, cc. 6-9, 1263f.

¹²⁶ Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 158ff.

¹²⁷ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 897, 144, 'Stephanus, Odacer, Gerardus et Matfridus comites honores et dignitates, quas a rege acceperant, perdunt'; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 163f.

¹²⁸ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 897, 144; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 196-7.

¹²⁹ For Ratbod's claims to Oeren: *DZwentibold*, nr. 4 and *Die Urkunden Ottos des II und Ottos des III*, ed. T. Sickel, *MGH Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae II* (Berlin, 1888-93), nr. 368. For his probable orchestration of St-Maximin's exhumation, Sigehard, *Miracula Maximini*, 230-4; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 176-7.

a new royal presence in the region. For all that the members of this aristocracy were linked to one another in bonds of association, their competition with one another over the possession of *honores* meant that when the king decided to move against the dominant faction, which he did in 896, he could count upon the support of their rivals who were eager to exploit their discomfort and to gain from their dispossession.

Zwentibold's treatment of the major Lotharingian aristocratic community proceeded on the dual basis of constructing a viable royal presence through the dispossession of aristocratic *honores*, and by forging an alliance with one of the leading figures of that community who had much to gain from the dismantling of entrenched Matfridinger power. The fruits of this policy were soon made evident for although the Matfridinger and their allies were able to mobilise their eastern connections and seek the intervention of the emperor at Worms, their apparent reconciliation with Zwentibold was not accompanied by the return of their lost *honores*.¹³⁰

There is every reason to think that had Zwentibold continued with this policy then he might have finally sidelined Matfridinger power and constructed the basis of an effective and lasting royal power in Lotharingia. Within three years, however, the king lay dead on the field of battle, killed by the resurgent Matfridinger, and abandoned by his main ally, the archbishop of Trier. What had happened to push Ratbod into opposition? We may see two forces at work. In the first instance, Ratbod's early support of the king had proceeded smoothly because he had benefited

¹³⁰ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 897, 145, 'Eodem anno Arnulfus Wormatiam venit ibique placitum tenuit; ubi ad eius colloquium Zuendibolch occurrit, et interventu imperatoris Stephanus, Gerardus et Matfridus cum filio reconcilantur'.

from the dispossession of his close rivals from within the local aristocracy. Yet, royal acquisitiveness would soon turn against Ratbod. This threat of royal unpredictability would lead to an estrangement between the two men and, as we shall see, the archbishop's increasing identification as a victim of royal aggression. Zwentibold's unpredictability effectively served to push the rival members of this local aristocracy into a political co-operative whose purpose was the protection of their traditional rights and privileges.

This sense of political self-awareness and co-operation between the members of the Moselle aristocracy was highlighted by Zwentibold's attempts to establish his own men in their place in the monastic *honores* that he had managed to regain with force in 896.¹³¹ Yet, these new men were not traditional rivals from within the ranks of the aristocracy. They were, in fact, members of the aristocracy from the western part of Lotharingia gained by Charles at Meerssen and whose incorporation into that kingdom had proceeded so well that its members sought to opt out of the Ribemont agreement of 880 by which they became subjects of the eastern king Louis the Younger. The most prominent of these new men was count Reginar whose name, if not completely alien to the Moselle valley, was indicative of a family whose traditional associations were certainly with the western kingdom. In essence, this new royal support upon which Zwentibold came to increasingly depend were outsiders, and their gains at the expense of the traditional leaders of the aristocratic community of the Moselle valley helped to endow that latter community with an increasing sense of self-awareness.

¹³¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 897, 144.

We shall return to a fuller discussion of Reginar's career in Chapter Five but it is still necessary to offer here some introductory remarks. As has been intimated, the family of the Reginar had some connection to the Moselle valley where, in the late 860s, a Reginar was abbot of the monastery of Echternach. The name, however, remains one indicative of a family whose traditional associations were with the western kingdom and, indeed, the Reginar whom we see at Echternach was almost certainly the supporter of Charles the Bald who died acting as the king's standard-bearer at the battle of Andernach in 876.¹³² The dominant figure within the ranks of this family in the mid ninth century was count Gislebert of the Maasgau who was described in the earliest sections of the Annals of Fulda as a vassal of Charles the Bald, *vassallus Karli*, and who had gained a degree of notoriety in his own day by abducting a daughter of the Emperor Lothar I and carrying her off to Aquitaine.¹³³ Nithard had called Gislebert *comes Masuariorum* but this *honor* had almost certainly been lost to him following the division of the Frankish empire at Verdun in 843, and in the aftermath of which he had sought out a career under Charles the Bald.¹³⁴ Towards the end of the reign we see Gislebert as a participant in the negotiations surrounding the arrangements for the government of the kingdom under Louis the Stammerer during Charles' absence in Italy.¹³⁵

The Reginar who we see supporting Zwentibold was the son of Count Giselbert and the daughter of Lothar I. His career had unfolded for the most part in a

¹³² *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 876, 209; Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 876, 112.

¹³³ *Annales Fuldenses*, a. 846, 36.

¹³⁴ Nithard, *Historiarum*, III, 3; English translation by B. Scholz, *Carolingian Chronicles* (Ann Arbor, 1970). We should note however that Gislebert may have received offices from the emperor following his reconciliation with him in 848 (*Annales Fuldenses*, a. 848, 38, 'pro Gisalberhto, qui eodem anno ad fidem eius venerat, reconciliationis gratia direxit') for a 863 charter of Ansfridus to Lorsch granted properties, 'in pago Darnau, ... quae sita est super fluvium Geldium in comitatu Giselberti', see *MGH SS*, XXI, 370.

¹³⁵ *Conventus Carisiacensis*, n. 281, 359.

purely western context. Reginar emerges in the sources for the first time in 886 when he gained recognition as the man who retrieved the body of the fallen *dux* Henry at Paris.¹³⁶ When he next appeared it was in the company of the western aristocrats Baldwin II of Flanders and his brother Rudolf in 895.¹³⁷ This all means that for all Reginar may well have been motivated by old claims and associations when he opted to join with Zwentibold in 895, he was in effect an outsider to the aristocracy which had come to enjoy entrenched political power in the Moselle valley since the death of Lothar II. It was this promotion of a clear outsider at the expense of the 'native' aristocracy that encouraged a sense of political self-awareness to develop within the ranks of the latter community, and which was expressed in their common political association to replace Zwentibold with Louis the Child in 900.

It is clear that Reginar's stock rose as that of the Moselle aristocracy fell. Following his decision to join with Zwentibold in 895 we see Reginar in control of the monasteries of St-Servatius at Maastricht and Echternach near Trier.¹³⁸ Reginar's rise to a position of prominence was not simply a corollary of the catastrophe then befalling the local aristocracy but actually served to push Ratbod into clear political association with them, and into opposition with the king. The monastery of Echternach provides a useful example of these themes in action.

¹³⁶ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 886, 61 and n.6 where the editor Simson identifies this *Ragnerus* as our Reginar.

¹³⁷ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 895, 76 and n.4 for Simson's identification of this *Ragnerus* as the same man as in a. 886. For the growth of Flemish power during this period, J. Dhondt, *Études sur la Naissance des Principautés Territoriales en France (IX^e-X^e Siècle)* (Bruges, 1948), 108ff and H. J. Tanner, *Families, Friends and Allies. Boulogne and Politics in Northern France and England, c.879-1160* (Leiden, 2004), 20-68.

¹³⁸ For St-Servatius: *DZwentibold*, nrs. 20-21; H. Beumann, 'König Zwentibolds Kurswechsel im Jahre 898', in *RhVjBl*, xxxi (1966/7), 17-41; Schieffer, 'Kanzlei', 31.

Echternach had almost always been in the hands of the region's lay aristocracy. As we have seen, a member of the Reginar family had been in control of the monastery in the 860s, but since the death of Lothar II possession was enjoyed by the Matfridinger. Adalhard the Seneschal had held the monastery in the 850s and in more recent times it was held by his son Adalhard, the father of counts Gerard and Matfrid, and their kinsman Robert, the count of the Nahegau.¹³⁹ It is reasonable to conclude that the appearance of the outsider Reginar at Echternach would have angered those with more recent claims to lordship at the monastery.

This demonstration of royal munificence to Reginar would also have angered the archbishop of Trier. Echternach was an old episcopal possession and had been founded by Irmina of Oeren (another Trier dependency) in the late seventh century.¹⁴⁰ In more recent times Ratbod had sought to improve his relations with the community and a royal diploma issued in 895 suggests that he had successfully managed to reacquire the monastery following its loss by Count Robert in the aftermath of Megingoz's murder. The grant of the monastery to Reginar shortly thereafter was a real threat to Ratbod's plans of re-establishing the position and possessions of his church and it showed that he, like the other members of his aristocratic community, was not immune to the king's rapacious unpredictability. The archbishop also lost the monastery of St-Servatius to Reginar at this time. It was a prize that he had only just acquired from Arnulf in 888.¹⁴¹

A real sense of a feeling of despair within the ranks of the local aristocracy is

¹³⁹ For Adalhard the Seneschal's possession of Echternach, *DLothar I*, nr. 35.

¹⁴⁰ Heidrich, 'Stiftungen', 141.

¹⁴¹ Hlawitschka, *Lotharingen*, 109.

detectable in Regino's Chronicle. Writing shortly after the death of king Zwentibold Regino recorded how the final dispute with the *primores regni* had arisen on account of the king's failure to maintain the peace, but also because leadership of the kingdom had been awarded to women and non-noble men rather than, as it should have been, the *honestiores* and *nobiliores* who instead suffered the loss of their *honores et dignitates*, 'Dum haec in Germania aguntur, inter Zuendibolch et primoribus regni inexpressibilis oritur dissensio propter assiduas depredationes et rapinas, quae in regno fiebant, et quia cum mulieribus et ignobilioribus regni negotia disponens honestiores et nobiliores quosque deiciebat et honoribus et dignitatibus expoliabat'.¹⁴² Regino here may well have been deploying the expected topoi of bad kingship but there is a real sense that he was reporting too genuine grievances held by the members of his own aristocracy. Indeed, they had lost their *honores et dignitates* to unpredictable royal rapacity and the main beneficiary of it all was the outsider, Reginar. This narrative reveals that the local aristocracy, of which Regino himself was a member, felt a common threat to their position from, on the one hand, their king, and, on the other, the rise of outsiders to positions of prominence.

This sense of an increasing political self-awareness on the part of the members of the Moselle aristocracy was encouraged also by the central role that the city of Trier came to play in the late ninth century political landscape.¹⁴³ Although Trier had by virtue of its archiepiscopal role, long been an important political and spiritual centre, it had been visited by Carolingian kings on only a handful of occasions in the course of ninth century.¹⁴⁴ However, even allowing for the short

¹⁴² Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 900, 148.

¹⁴³ For Trier's prominence in the late ninth century see Brühl, 'Königspfalz', 251ff.

¹⁴⁴ C.-R. Brühl, *Palatium und Civitas. Studien zur Profanographie spätantiker Civitates vom 3. bis zum 13. Jahrhundert*, 2 vols (Cologne and Vienna, 1975/90), I, 68.

duration of his reign, Zwentibold's itinerary, when compared to those of his predecessors, shows a marked preference for residence at Trier, with recorded stays there on no fewer than five occasions.¹⁴⁵ Can we account for this sudden and unexpected prominence on the part of Trier?

It would be unwise to excessively play down the longstanding and traditional relationship that the monarchy possessed with its urban episcopal sites.¹⁴⁶ Given the role of individual churchmen as agents of royal authority, and the central position of their *civitates* in the social and economic networks which underpinned local collective action in the early middle ages, that relationship had always been a crucial one in the application of Carolingian royal power.¹⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the clear prominence into which Trier emerged as the base of Zwentibold's royal power needs to be explained. We ought to remind ourselves of the reduced material basis upon which Zwentibold had to attempt to build a viable kingship. The loss of royal control, in particular, over the distribution of monastic *honores* represented a serious undercutting of effective royal authority over the leading aristocratic figures. A greater reliance upon episcopal sites offered the king one means of compensating for this deficiency in the material basis of effective rulership.¹⁴⁸

Indeed, much of Zwentibold's problems, as we have seen, arose from his competition with the aristocracy over the custody of monastic *honores*, and in the

¹⁴⁵ *DZwentibold*, nrs. 4-5, 18, 26-27; Brühl, *Palatium und Civitas*, 69.

¹⁴⁶ Nelson, 'Charles the Bald and the Church', 82-90.

¹⁴⁷ Nelson, 'Charles the Bald and the Church', 82-83. For the central position of cities in social, economic and political networks, and notwithstanding the development of monasticism, see Innes, *State and Society*, 95-105.

¹⁴⁸ Ewig, 'Trierer Land', 288.

face of such competition, a greater reliance on the military reservoirs of the episcopate allowed the king to compensate for the otherwise limited material basis upon which his kingship was constructed. Certainly, it had been in such an attempt to stabilise the region in the aftermath of the murder of Count Megingoz in 893 that Arnulf himself had met with each of the region's bishops, 'Arnulfus Baioaria egressus Franconofurt venit et Rhenum transiens civitates, quae in regno Lotharii sunt, ex maxima parte circuiuit; in quo itinere ingentia dona illi ab episcopis oblata sunt'.¹⁴⁹ Presumably, this was because the bishops had always been the central figures in Frankish arrangements for military defence.¹⁵⁰ As recently as 882, it had been the bishops of Trier and Metz, alongside Count Adalhard of Metz, who had attempted, albeit unsuccessfully, to halt the advance of the invading Vikings following their attack upon Trier, 'Quod cum comperisset eiusdem urbis antistes [Bishop Wala of Metz], adiuncto sibi Bertulfo episcopo et Adalardo comite ultro illis obviam ad pugnam procedit. Inito certamine Nortmanni victores extiterunt. Isdem Wala episcopus in prelio cecidit, ceteri fugerunt'.¹⁵¹

Although it is always difficult to observe quantitative changes, it does seem that given the fierce disputes that erupted between Zwentibold and his *primores*, there was a real intensification of royal reliance upon the military reservoirs of the episcopate during his short reign. This is the impression, certainly, provided by Zwentibold's reaction to the invasion of his kingdom by Charles the Simple in 898 when, faced with the apparent success of his enemy, the king was saved by the inter-

¹⁴⁹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 893, 141; *Annales Fuldenses* (B), a. 893, 122, tells us that Arnulf came west for the purposes of prayer, 'Ante quadragesimam rex per totam occidentalium Francorum provintiam monasteria, episcopatus causa orationis obibat'.

¹⁵⁰ Nelson, 'Charles the Bald and the Church', 82-3.

¹⁵¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 882, 119.

vention of the bishop of Liège, 'Interea Zuendibolch ad Franconem episcopum venit et eum cum omnibus suis secum adsumens Mosam transiit et ad Florichingas venit, ubi omnes proceres regni, qui in illis partibus erant, ad eum confluerunt'.¹⁵² This bond of reliance was seen again in the following year when, seeking to finally destroy his rival Reginar and his accomplices, Zwentibold was forced to abandon his siege of their stronghold owing to the lack of co-operation which he was receiving from his assembled bishops, 'episcopis iubet, ut Reginarium et Odacrum et socios eorum anathematizarent; sed cum illi anathematis sententiam proferre recusarent, minis, exprobrationibus et contumeliis utitur, et sic soluta obsidione unusquisque ad propria redit'.¹⁵³

This is an impression corroborated by other evidence. In what is a significant coincidence with the period of his break from Reginar, Zwentibold issued a diploma in the early months of 898 in which he exempted the church of Trier from all its obligations except its annual provision of six horses that were to be destined, presumably, for the royal army.¹⁵⁴ At the monastery of St-Maximin, too, which he had managed to regain possession in 896, Zwentibold sought to re-impose the community's obligations to the crown that his own father had exempted on his accession to power in 888.¹⁵⁵ These pieces of evidence together suggest that the king was actively seeking to replenish his stock of royal possessions and rights and that he attempted to do this through a vigorous exploitation of both his favoured archiepiscopal see and his monastic holdings.

¹⁵² Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 898, 146. We should note, too, that it was precisely at this point that the king issued diplomas for the churches of Liège and Cambrai, *DZwentibold*, nrs. 23-24; see also, Schieffer, 'Kanzlei', 32.

¹⁵³ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 899, 147.

¹⁵⁴ *DZwentibold*, nr. 18.

¹⁵⁵ *DZwentibold*, nr. 14; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 193.

Trier came to prominence not simply as a reservoir of military support, but because it offered the king hospitality. Episcopal and monastic hospitality had always been a crucial, if somewhat secondary, support of the monarchy. Yet, just as Professor Nelson has reminded us that Charles the Bald came to rely increasingly upon the hospitality of his own church, Zwentibold, too, given the shrunken foundations of royal power in his reign, looked to his church for material support. In addition to Trier, the *civitates* of Strasbourg and Toul provided residence for the king, while so too did the monasteries of St-Goar, Nivelles, St-Evre, and, it is safe to presume, his own monastery of St-Maximin.¹⁵⁶ It seems certain, however, that Trier bore the brunt of the court's demands for hospitality. Indeed, for all that the city was to emerge as the favoured residence of the king, and the greatest beneficiary of his largesse, the crown did make great demands upon the city and its inhabitants. Certainly, episcopal complaints about royal demands were not new. At the synod of Meaux-Paris in 845, for example, the assembled bishops had complained to Charles the Bald about the unjust exactions which his court imposed whenever it visited a *civitas*, 'Vestra studebit magnitudo obnixius observare, ut, quando transitus vester iuxta civitates acciderit, immunes et liberas vestra dominatio iubeat a depraedationum exactionibus fieri mansiones intra civitatem'.¹⁵⁷ Such complaints were made, too, about the impact of Zwentibold and his court at Trier. For, in the early months of 899, the king was obliged to acknowledge the complaints brought before him and to exempt the inhabitants of the city from all impositions, excepting those which were still owed to the archbishop, and to limit all subsequent royal demands. It was, perhaps, a sign that the king was fast running out of time: 'quia Richquinus et

¹⁵⁶ *DZwentibold*, nr. 6 (Strasbourg); 17 (Toul); 2 (St-Goar); 16 (Nivelles); for the assumption that the king celebrated Christmas 897 at the monastery of St-Evre see, Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 124.

¹⁵⁷ *MGH Capit*, II, c. 26-27; cited in Nelson, 'Charles the Bald and the Church', 85-6.

Widiacus venerandi comites nostri indicantes nobis homines sancti Petri in civitate manentes de nostro frequenti adventu magnam incommoditatem ac dispendium pati...ut nemo nostris nostrorumque successorum temporibus in domibus predictorum hominum, videlicet sancti Petri Treueris manentium, mansionem accipere nisi quem episcopus iusserit neque ullam eis quispiam in eorum mansionibus incommoditatem ulterius facere presumat'.¹⁵⁸

4.4: Conclusion.

I have argued in this chapter that the establishment of King Zwentibold cannot be seen as another example of the continuing permanence of the *regnum Lotharii* at the end of the ninth century. The difficulties faced by Arnulf when he attempted to establish his son as *rex* in the summer of 894 show that that attempt was another example of royal exploitation of a particular political tradition, and that it had little basis in the political identities of the region's aristocracy. Indeed, Zwentibold himself had ambitions to a larger kingdom than that offered by the traditions of the *regnum Lotharii*.

Nevertheless, it was in Zwentibold's reign that distinct moves towards the creation of a common regnal political identity took hold amongst the Lotharingian aristocracy and I have argued further in this chapter that this was the effect of an initial moment of politicisation amongst the members of one distinct aristocratic community inhabiting the Moselle valley. As we have seen, Zwentibold was faced with a genuine decline in the availability of the material components which together

¹⁵⁸ *DZwentibold*, nr. 27; Brühl, *Palatium und Civitas*, 69.

made up a viable kingdom and this, so I have argued, made it necessary for him to focus his rule, firstly, from the city of Trier and secondly, to embark upon a fierce and violent competition with this Moselle aristocracy over the balance in the possession of monastic *honores*. These developments, however, helped to give this Moselle aristocracy a distinct sense of their common political troubles.

A more significant contribution to this process of politicising the Moselle aristocracy, however, was the rise of the outsider Reginar to a position of prominence. Reginar came from the western half of Lotharingia, that region which had been ceded to Charles the Bald at Meerssen in 870 and whose aristocracy had in the meantime been successfully and fully incorporated into the western kingdom. Indeed, so successful was this incorporation that its members sought to opt out from the terms of the Treaty of Ribemont which had brought them under east-Frankish rule in 880. Reginar, therefore, was a clear outsider to the members of the Moselle aristocracy and Zwentibold's favour towards him contributed further to the endowment of the Moselle aristocratic community with a distinct self-awareness and whose political *raison d'être* was to re-establish their traditional rights and possessions by offering their support to Louis the Child.

When it came, however, the deposition of Zwentibold did not mark the final development of an aristocratic community fully aware of its political distinctiveness from the rest of the east Frankish kingdom. The Lotharingians of Flodoard's day included amongst their ranks aristocrats from the western regions of Lotharingia. In 900, however, membership of this nascent distinct aristocracy was still limited to the members of the Moselle aristocracy who had suffered under Zwentibold and had as

yet not been extended to include those members of the aristocracy from the more distant westerly parts of the old middle kingdom. This enlargement of the politically distinct and self-aware aristocracy did not occur until the reign of Louis the Child and it is to this process that discussion now turns.

Chapter 5

Ducal Lotharingia?

5.1:Introduction.

Although such a perspective was invisible to contemporaries, 911 marked an important stage in the development of the Frankish kingdoms. It was in this year that a series of transformations occurred in the political landscape whose impact would continue to be felt into the later tenth century and beyond. The growing permanence of Scandinavian power in the western kingdom was accepted by Charles the Simple at a meeting with the Viking leader Rollo at St-Clair-sur-Epte, and his acknowledgement there of the lands possessed by the invaders at Rouen and in its surrounding areas effectively marked the first stage in the emergence of the later duchy of Normandy.¹ In the east, meanwhile, the late autumnal days of 911 saw a more marked change at the heart of the kingdom of Louis the Child, whose death at the age only of eighteen on September 24th, brought Carolingian rule to an abrupt end in the east and accelerated the processes of political fragmentation from the court to the constituent provinces and *regna* of the kingdom - a development already visible by the middle years of Louis' reign – and which provided the most significant obstacles to the reestablishment of effective royal authority under Conrad I (911-918) and his Ottonian successors of the early tenth century.²

¹ For this period of the nascent Norman duchy see D. Bates, *Normandy before 1066* (London, 1982) and his 'West Francia: The Northern Principalities', *NCMH*, III, 398-419; E. Searle, *Predatory Kinship and the Creation of Norman Power, 840-1066* (Berkeley, 1988).

² Hlawitschka, *Lotharingen*, 194. Discussions of this general theme and the nature of royal responses are provided in Althoff, *Amicitiae und Pacta*, 3-36. Central to the discussion remains the question on the nature of the ducal position and investigations of their role and competences are provided by H-W. Goetz, '„Dux“ und „ducatus“. Begriff- und verfassungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur Entstehung des sogenannten „Jüngerer“ Stammesherzogtums an der Wende vom neunten zum zehnten Jahrhundert' (Bochum, 1977); K-F. Werner has investigated this theme in several articles but

This shift in the balance of political action is well observed in a third example from 911 and with it our gaze again returns to Lotharingia. For it was in that year that the aristocratic community of the province reversed a political connection with the rulers of the eastern kingdom – one which even at its most recent in the westerly parts of Lotharingia still went back a full thirty years or more to the treaty of Ribemont in 880 - and offered their allegiance to a western king, Charles the Simple. In many respects 911 opens a new chapter in Lotharingian political history, and it is one in which the aristocratic community, and its most powerful representatives, determined the political destiny of their own region and the nature of royal access to it.

The purpose of this chapter is to build on the conclusions of Chapter Four and to ask what forces contributed to the processes by which the various aristocratic communities of the old middle kingdom came to think of themselves as being politically distinct from other *regna* of the Frankish kingdom. In the first instance, however, we will return to 911 and the man generally held to have been responsible for the change in the political affiliation of Lotharingia: Reginar I. As discussion will show, his career provides in effect a microcosm of the increasing strength and durability of forces of political self-awareness in Lotharingia. It will show, however, that such an outcome was not guaranteed even as late as the early years of the tenth century and will therefore seek to explain its emergence.

see in particular, 'La g n se des duch s en France et en Allemagne', *Settimane*, xxvii (1981), 175-207 and reprinted in his *Vom Frankenreich zur Entfaltung Deutschlands und Frankenreichs* (Sigmaringen, 1984), 278-310; M. Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens. Untersuchungen zur Entstehung des s chsischen Herzogtums im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert* (Husum, 1996).

As we have seen, it was Reginar I who managed to deliver Lotharingia into the hands of Charles the Simple in 911. Chapter 4 argued that Reginar had been essentially an outsider to the dominant aristocratic community of the Moselle valley and that it was this dichotomy that sat at the heart of the problems that in the end defeated King Zwentibold. How then could Reginar now arrive at a position of generally acknowledged leadership in 911? This is a crucial question. In one respect Reginar's career in the reign of Louis the Child was a return to the situation under Zwentibold when his ambitions had focussed on the monastic *honores* of Echternach and St-Servatius at Maastricht, and to whose recovery under Louis he now turned his attention. He also gained the monastery of Stavlot-Malmédy from the king.³ Why did Reginar not face opposition similar to that of just a few years previous? What now made him a less threatening figure to the aristocracy of the Moselle valley?

It is generally accepted that Reginar I (c. 850-915) was the main instigator of Lotharingia's shift of political allegiance in 911, and that this event represented in effect the culmination of many years' steady progress in a competition over the leadership of the province.⁴ The traditional means of analysis has been to note Reginar's possession of a series of lofty titles awarded by the royal chancery and to then interpret these titles as representing progressive stages in the accruing of political authority in Lotharingia.⁵ From the position of a relatively humble *fidelis* in the service of king Zwentibold in the last years of the ninth century, therefore, the

³ Heidrich, 'Stiftungen', 138.

⁴ For the events of 911 and Reginar's role see Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 194-198; Schneidmüller, 'Französische Lothringenpolitik', 9-11; Boshof, 'Lotharingien-Lothringen: Vom Teilreich zum Herzogtum', in A. Heit, ed. *Zwischen Gallia und Germania, Frankreich und Deutschland. Konstanz und Wandel raumbestimmender Kräfte* (Trier 1987), 129-154; W. Mohr, *Geschichte des Herzogtums Lothringen*, I (Saarbrücken, 1974), 386; R. E. Barth, *Der Herzog in Lotharingen im 10. Jahrhundert* (Sigmaringen, 1990), 18.

⁵ Most recently see Barth, *Herzog*, 15-38.

progress of Reginar's career is investigated in this way. So, before Zwentibold turned against Reginar in late 898 the king's increasing reliance upon the support of his faithful man was reflected in a diploma in which Reginar had by then achieved the distinction of being referred to as *dilectus comes*; while, in the years after 902, when he returned to a position of favour in the Conradine-backed regime of Louis the Child, Reginar's increasing prominence as the reign wore on was acknowledged in a series of distinguishing epithets applied by the royal chancery - *comes illustris*, *missus* and *egregius comes*.⁶

However, the search for the existence of a regional aristocratic hierarchy, which possessed a number of ranks visible to us in the variety of titles like those gained and lost by Reginar in the course of his career, nowadays seems a much too structuralist approach for any realistic understanding of the mechanisms of early medieval societies and, in particular, the subtleties of political organisation.⁷ Certainly, it is just as likely that Charles the Simple was as much the architect of his own success in gaining valuable ancestral lands in 911 as he was the apparent beneficiary of a deliberate change of political direction made by the leaders of the regional aristocracy in that year. The king almost certainly had associations going back into the final years of the ninth century with prominent secular and ecclesiastical figures of the region and, by 911, he seems also to have been able to rely upon the support of kin-members there. In royal diplomas both the bishops of

⁶ *DZwentibold*, nr. 7, 'ob interventum fidelium nostrorum Odacrii et Reginharii'; nr. 17, 'Reginharius dilectus comes noster'; Reginar's prominence in the reign of Zwentibold was later acknowledged by Regino, 'Eodem anno Zuendibolch Reginarium ducem sibi fidissimum et unicum consiliarium, nescio cuius instinctu, a se repulit et honoribus, hereditatibus, quas in suo regno habebat, interdictis eum extra regnum infra XIII dies secedere iubet'. (*Chronicon*, a. 898, 145); *DLouis the Child*, nr. 16: *comes*; nr. 50: *comes illustris*; nr. 53: *missus Reginarii religiosi comitis et abbatis*; nr. 57: *egregius comes*.

⁷ See comments in introduction above, 11ff.

Liège and Toul were characterised as possessing consanguinity with Charles, and such a relationship to the king can be surmised too for a number of the most prominent secular aristocrats.⁸

Yet, even if we acknowledge that the king could fashion favourable political conditions for himself in Lotharingia, and that one necessary result of such a recognition is a reduction in the prominence given to Reginar in the orchestration of that shift of allegiance, it is clear that we ought not to reject fully the traditional view that he, through his own support of the west Frankish king, provided some form of political leadership for the leading members of the aristocracy. Unfortunately, the evidence for Reginar's involvement remains somewhat circumstantial but, taken together with what we know of his position in the periods both before and after the acknowledgement of Charles the Simple, it does seem more than likely that this powerful count provided a large degree of political guidance for the Lotharingian aristocracy in the final crucial months of 911.

The last Carolingian king of the eastern Franks, Louis the Child, died on September 24th 911, and after an interregnum of almost six weeks, during which the greatest men of the kingdom gathered to debate the succession, it was Conrad, the leading representative of the kin-group to which historians have applied his name, who was elected at Forchheim at a point between the seventh and tenth days of

⁸ Shortly after his assumption of power in the west, Charles issued a diploma for the monastery of St-Mihiel to the south of Verdun in which he confirmed a previously issued diploma of king Zwentibold, *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 11; *DZwentibold*, nr. 3; R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751-987* (London, 1983), 308. For bishop Stephen of Liège, *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 81: *consanguinitati Karoli affinis*; for Drogo of Toul, *ibid.*, nr. 70: *consanguineus*; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 195-6; Schneidmüller, 'Lothringenpolitik', 9 for his secular associations: count Wigeric of the Bitgau, count Berengar of the Lommegau and count Richuin of Verdun.

November.⁹ While the Franks, Saxons, Alemannians and Bavarians together chose Conrad as king, one contemporary annalist recorded how the Lotharingians looked instead to Charles the Simple, ‘Hludowicus rex mortuus. Chonradus filius Chonradi comitis a Francis et Saxonibus seu Alamannis ac Bauguariis rex electus. Et Hlodarii Karolum regem Galliae super se fecerunt’.¹⁰ This event had certainly already taken place by the time of Conrad’s acknowledgement at Forcheim. The introduction of the formula ‘largiore hereditate indepta’ into the diplomas of Charles the Simple locates the beginning of his lordship over his new territories to a point between October 10th and November 27th, while a specific date of November 1st is provided by the Annals of Prüm as the beginnings of royal lordship in the region.¹¹

The apparent speed with which the Lotharingians moved to accept Charles the Simple, and the further suggestion hinted at by the *Annales Alamannici* that on Louis’ death they were already in rebellion against him, returns us to a consideration of Reginar’s role in the whole enterprise.¹² If we take the subsequent extent of the king’s gratitude as a guide to the level of Reginar’s involvement in 911, then it certainly would appear that he played a decisive role in engineering the Lotharingians’ switch of loyalty to Charles the Simple. He accompanied the king to Metz as early as the beginning of January 912 where a royal diploma was issued for the restoration of lands to St-Maximin at Trier where Reginar was now installed as

⁹ Dümmler, *Geschichte*, 559f, 576; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 194.

¹⁰ *Annales Alamannici*, a. 912, MGH SS, I, 55.

¹¹ *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 67; *Annales Prumienses*, a. 911, ‘Quo etiam anno Ludowicus rex, filius Arnulfi moritur, et Carolus occidentalium rex regnum Lotharii suscepit Kl. Nov’ (Boschen, 77); Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*, 399.

¹² The important point here is that the entry for 911 in the *Annales Alamannici* reads, ‘Hlothariorum principes a Hludowico rege divisi’, and that this is only then followed by the report for 912 that, ‘Hludowicus rex mortuus....Et Hlodarii Karolum regem Galliae super se fecerunt’. (*Annales Alamannici*, a. 911-912, 55); Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 196-8; Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*, 400ff.

lay-abbot.¹³ He, too, following the *intitulatio* applied to him by one of his monastic scribes – *comes ac missus dominicus* – evidently conceived of his position in dual terms, and however anachronistic the title *missus dominicus* may have appeared in the early years of the tenth century, it must have been the connotations of royal service inherent in the title which encouraged its use by Reginar as a declaration of his own power.¹⁴ Given the obvious conception of his own power, and his subsequent reception of St-Maximin from Charles the Simple, it is hard not to arrive at the conclusion that the grant constituted a reward to Reginar for the part played in the king's successful acquisition of the region. It appears, then, that Reginar very probably did play the leading aristocratic role in delivering Lotharingia to Charles the Simple in late 911. But, such a conclusion does more than simply reconfirm longer standing historical constructions. Reginar's role in 911 actually poses two interesting problems that require analysis. In the first instance, we will uncover how the apparent regnal scale of Reginar's ambitions was in fact a rather late development in his own career. I will then argue that this political development was in the end only made possible by a combination of factors at work in the early years of the tenth century. In short, it will be argued that the idea of Lotharingia as a viable political unit, and which ought naturally to govern its own affairs, came only to maturity in the early years of the tenth century. From this perspective, the importance of 911 was not its return to the western kingdom *per se* but rather that the

¹³ *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 69. For a discussion of St-Maximin's three ninth century royal diplomas see Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 185-198. Reginar's possession of the *honor* was the latest in a series of lay-abbacies which had included the Conradine count Eberhard as recently as 909, Megingoz in the reign of the emperor Arnulf and which would be continued in the next generation by Reginar's son Gisbert. For Reginar's possession see Parisot, *Lorraine*, 505 and Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 198 and n. 49.

¹⁴ *Stavelot*, nr. 51; on *missi* see K. F. Werner, '*Missus-marchio-comes*. Entre l'administration centrale et l'administration locale de l'empire carolingien', in W. Paravicini and K. F. Werner, eds. *Histoire comparée de l'administration IVe-XVIIIe siècles*, Beihefte der Francia, ix (Munich, 1980), 191-239, at 191-211; Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 51-54; Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*, 113-114.

year represented the first credible expressions of political togetherness and self-awareness by members of an otherwise fragmented aristocracy. Reginar's return to a position of favour and influence in the Moselle valley ran the risk of once again alienating the traditional leaders of this region. How then can we explain now his acceptance in the years after 900?

Previous explanations of Reginar's ability to deliver Lotharingia into the hands of Charles the Simple have, quite rightly, emphasised the scale of the wherewithal provided by his possession of the great monastic *honores* of Echternach, St-Servatius, and the double monastery of Stavelot-Malmédy.¹⁵ Yet, as correct as such an observation undoubtedly is, when the full span of Reginar's career is considered, his possession of these *honores* falls clearly into a latter and quite distinct part of that period. Certainly, much of the preceding years of his career are now invisible to us but enough remains to form the impression that this later period was distinct from an earlier, and more peripheral local context, in which Reginar had then operated. As discussion will show, Reginar's transformation from peripheral figure to effective regnal supremo mirrored a larger process of political identity formation.¹⁶ If we consider the whole span of his career, it is clear that for all his success in climbing to a position of apparent leadership of the aristocracy by 911, Reginar remained for much of that period an outsider excluded from access to the competition over the rich *honores* of the traditional heartlands of the Moselle valley. This chapter will argue that Reginar's ultimate success in achieving access to this

¹⁵ See, for example, the opportunities offered by the large estates of Stavelot-Malmédy which Lothar II could use to reward his own *fideles*. (*DLothar II*, nr. 17; *Stavelot*, nr. 34).

¹⁶ I use 'peripheral' here to refer to the geographical distance and political rivalry which separated Reginar from the leading figures of the Moselle valley and should not be interpreted to mean that Reginar had no political influence at the royal centre which of course Zwentibold actively promoted.

region was a result not simply of his own labours but of a more fundamental process of identity formation which now delineated the contours of political action and which stands in stark contrast to the divisions within the 'regnal' aristocracy apparent in the reign of Zwentibold.

This chapter will proceed on three fronts. Initially we will further explore the position of Reginar as an aristocratic outsider. We will then pose the question of how he was able subsequently to rise to a position of political leadership by 911 and investigate whether it was upon the foundations of a duchy, established by the Conradiner family in the reign of Louis the Child, that he later established his rights to rule. In a final section this chapter will build upon the conclusion that the Conradiner duchy did not in fact create an institutional structure of rulership which was then taken over by Reginar. It will argue, however, that the short Conradiner presence in Lotharingia remains significant in creating the conditions in which Reginar could achieve his later position of leadership.

5.2: Reginar, the outsider.

So far we have seen Reginar in his guise as regnal supremo, helping to lever Lotharingia into the hands of Charles the Simple in late 911. Such a perspective, however, carries with it a danger of overlooking much of the earlier parts of his career and, in particular, the nature of his transformation from peripheral figure to leading political operator.¹⁷ Certainly, there remains a considerable period to account for. As the progeny of count Gisibert and one of the daughters of the

emperor Lothar I abducted and carried off to Aquitaine by her ambitious would-be spouse in 846, it would seem reasonable to hypothesize a birth-date for their son to the years before 850 – a date which would put Reginar well into his sixties on his death in 915 – and which in turn would allow us to plausibly suggest a date at some point in the 870s at which he would have entered into the competition for influence and status both in the localities and at court which together constituted an early medieval political career.¹⁸ Can we account for his activities during these years?

Despite the richness of the source material left from the late ninth century, its emphasis upon the activities of the ruling family, its closest supporters and competitors means that any attempt to probe the careers of those excluded from the highest levels of influence and power, either in the regions or at court, from narratives such as Hincmar's *Annales* or the later *Chronicle* written by Regino of Prüm, tend to be met with silence. Indeed, it is an indication of the sources' particular predisposition towards events concerning the monarchy that Reginar only made his first appearances in the contemporary accounts when, in effect, the royal court came to him. He evidently participated in the royal army sent by Charles the Fat in 886 against the Vikings at Paris for he gained some distinction in that year as the man who retrieved the body of the army's leader, the *dux* Henry, who had fallen to his death in a concealed Viking ditch while reconnoitring the area around the besiegers' stronghold.¹⁹ Similarly, it was not to be for a further nine years that Reg-

¹⁷ This eastward shift of Reginar's political focus is seen in a comparison between maps 6 and 7 which highlight his move towards the Moselle with the loss of *honores* by that region's established aristocracy.

¹⁸ See above chapter 4 for Reginar's parentage. See also Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 176, n. 61; Barth, *Herzog*, 15; Werner, 'Die Nachkommen', IV, 449, n. 8. For Reginar's death, Richer, *Historia*, ed. R. Latouche, *Histoire de France* (Paris, 1930), I, 34.

¹⁹ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 886, 61.

inar would next appear in the source material, and the occasion then was the arrival in the late autumn of 895 of yet another royal army which, now under the leadership of king Zwentibold, came to lay siege to the city of Laon. For Reginar, as for others, such demonstrations of royal power evidently meant making difficult choices and in that year he offered his service to Zwentibold.²⁰

As meagre as they are, these short pieces of evidence do permit us to say something about the nature of Reginar's career before his rise to a position of prominence in the early tenth century. As the sources suggest, he was evidently a man of little standing at court and in all likelihood his only real interface with the monarchy came with his participation in the relatively infrequent royal campaigns dispatched against the Vikings.²¹ This social distance was almost certainly a reflection of the great geographical distances that separated Reginar from the heartlands of east Frankish royal power around Frankfurt, Mainz and Regensburg. Although, as we shall see, his landed interests fell clearly within the limits of the post-Ribemont eastern kingdom, such was Reginar's distance from the political centre that, in reality, his closest associations were with such evidently western figures as Baldwin II of Flanders and, indeed, king Charles the Simple. It was with these men that Reginar's earliest known political associations and as far as we can tell there was little to connect him with the political centre of the kingdom to which he nominally belonged.

²⁰ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 895, 76, 'Zwendebolchus vero rex et Karolus cum exercitu veniunt Laudunumque obsidione cingunt. Balduinus vero comes et Hrodulfus frater eius necnon et Ragnerus non bono consilio accepto Karolum reliquerunt et se ad Zuendebolchum contulerunt'.

²¹ This, of course, is not to play down the effectiveness of the royal army as one of the stages upon which images of royalty were transmitted from the court to the various regions of the kingdom, see above chapter 3.

Reginar was not the only local figure who realised that some accommodation would have to be made with the ambitious Zwentibold in late 895; according to the Annals of St-Vaast so too did Count Baldwin and his brother Rudolf. Indeed, the cadence of the annalist's entry strongly suggests that the three men together offered their services to the recently arrived king, 'Zwendebolchus vero rex et Karolus cum exercitu veniunt Laudunumque obsidione cingunt. Balduinus vero comes et Hrodulfus frater eius necnon et Ragnerus non bono consilio accepto Karolum reliquerunt et se ad Zuendebolchum contulerunt'.²² Baldwin and Rudolf can be identified only with the contemporary counts of those names whom we see active in both Flanders and around Cambrai in the late ninth and early tenth centuries and Reginar's association with them permits, therefore, a valuable perspective on the topography of his landed interests during this period of his career.²³ If we turn our gaze from the valuable monastic *honores* that Reginar would possess later and turn our attention, instead, to the concentration of lands and counties in his possession at this time, we are presented with a landscape which supports this picture of close political association and networks which, together, worked to draw his attention towards the western political scene.

The city of Cambrai itself provides an illustrative example of how the contours of local aristocratic action could traverse apparent regnal frontiers in the formation of their own distinctive political landscapes. Although possession of the city had fallen to Charles the Bald in 870, by the terms of the agreement made at Ribemont in 880 it fell, alongside all the lands gained by the western king at

²² *Annales Vedastini*, a. 895, 76.

²³ Such an identification is made most recently by Tanner, *Families, Friends and Allies*, of which chapter one provides a full political narrative of the early counts of Boulogne.

Meerssen, into the hands of the eastern Carolingians.²⁴ And, although the bishops of the city did acknowledge this eastward shift of the royal presence – bishop Dodilo, for example, travelled to Worms in June 894 in the search of a grant confirming the immunity and royal protection of his church – the reality of immediate political action was one which operated across the regnal frontiers imposed by royal fiat in 870 and again in 880.²⁵

These realities of political action in a frontier region are not surprising. Cambrai was a suffragan diocese of the province of Reims and episcopal attention was always likely to have been drawn westwards as a result of the bishops' dual pastoral responsibility for the western diocese of Arras.²⁶ Such cross-frontier associations are reflected effectively, if somewhat indirectly, in an account contained in the much later *Gesta episcoporum cameracensium*, which recorded how one particular despoiler of the church's properties in the region of Arras continued to defy the demands of the bishop based at Cambrai until he was predictably struck down by God in punishment for his blasphemous actions.²⁷ The city, too, evidently provided one of the pivots around which the association between Reginar and the Flemish counts formed. It was at Cambrai, in the last decade of the ninth century, that Baldwin's brother Rudolf appears to have established himself as count, and his appearance as a significant political figure in this region would certainly have been

²⁴ *Annales Bertiniani*, a. 870, 173.

²⁵ *DArnulf*, nr. 127.

²⁶ *Annales Vedastini*, a.888, 64, 'Interim, dum haec aguntur, ordinatur Dodilo Camaracensium vel Atrebatensium ecclesiae episcopus XVI. Kal. Aprilis'.

²⁷ *Gesta episcoporum cameracensium*, c. 46, 418.

sufficient to draw the attention of a man like Reginar whose own lands and interests lay in the surrounding regions of the Hesbaye and Hainault.²⁸

The nature of the exercise of comital power has undergone something of a recent redefinition. No longer is the exercise of local political leadership seen, as Matthew Innes has shown, in terms of officially delegated judicial competence. In reality, political power was a series of exercises in collective action undertaken and agreed upon between the leading members of any local political society.²⁹ The impact of this new understanding is to reduce to a state of near redundancy those older viewpoints which interpreted the position of the count in strictly constitutional terms.³⁰ Such a perspective, too, has removed much of the connection previously assumed between the geographical unit of the *pagus*, and the politically defined space of the *comitatus*. Although scholars have long been content to see Reginar exercising what they conceived to have been officially delegated comital jurisdictions in a number of *pagi* in the Low Countries, full agreement has never been reached over just where exactly he was supposed to have governed as count.³¹ So while Reginar had certainly achieved the title of *comes* by virtue of his service to

²⁸ Although no contemporary source located Rudolf's county at Cambrai, I have not yet found any historian who doubts his possession of the county. For a twelfth-century report of his comital office at Cambrai see Nonn, *Pagus und Comitatus*, 119. For the location of the Hainault in the diocese of Cambrai see Folcuin, *Gesta*, c. 10, 60; and for the possession of lands here by the church, see *Gesta episcoporum cameracensium*, c.55, 420, '...ex rebus sanctae Mariae Cameracensis aecclisiae villam quae dicitur Villare, quae est sita in pago Hagnoense...'. We should note also that once the dispute over custody of St-Vaast had erupted between Baldwin and the archbishop of Reims, it was via his suffragan bishop of Cambrai that Fulk hoped to bring pressure to bear on his enemy, see *Historia*, IV, c. 6, 391 and c. 7, 396-7. The archbishop's hope that bishop Dodilo could influence the Flemish faction strengthens the view that they did establish a position in the region of Cambrai.

²⁹ Innes, *State and Society*, 4-12, 118-129.

³⁰ Nonn, *Pagus und Comitatus*, is the main proponent of this older perspective for our region of study, and it remains still valuable for its full description of these Lotharingian *pagi*.

³¹ Nonn, *Pagus und Comitatus*, 96-7, 104, 240 for his possession of the Maasgau and the Hesbaye, and perhaps too the Liègégau and Lommégau; C. Bernard, 'Etude sur le domaine ardennais de la famille des Regnier', *MA*, lxiii (1957), 2, for his apparent possession of the Hainault; Mohr, *Lothringen*, 13 for his possession of the Hesbaye; Boshof, 'Lotharingien-Lothringen', 143, for his

Zwentibold in the final years of the ninth century it is surely suggestive that the annalist of St-Vaast had not applied this dignity to Reginar when recording his decision to support the king in 895 or that no title was awarded by the king himself in the first diploma in which Reginar appeared and where he was styled simply as *fidelis*.³² For Reginar, the acquisition of the title *comes* was important because it reflected the nature of his closeness to the king and the status that this relationship carried in the prosecution of his interests in the localities; it was not about gaining control of an office which carried with it delegated political leadership.

Much the same problem confronts us when considering the extent of Reginar's landed wealth. Certainly, something of the extent of his lands is suggested by his control of lay-abbacies, but the value of such an approach declines when taking into account, as we must, the constant flux in the control of monastic lands made available to lay-abbots, and the fact that Reginar himself only began his accumulation of these valuable *honores* in the final years of the ninth century: St-Servatius in 896; Echternach in 897; Stavelot-Malmédy in 902; and St-Maximin, not until 912.³³ It follows, therefore, that the great landed endowments of each of these monasteries, from which Reginar would certainly later profit, could not have formed the foundations of his ambitions in the early stages of his career. It is possible, however, to provide some idea of just where Reginar's landed interests were located. We know that he possessed allodial lands on the right bank of the river Ourthe, in the

possession of the Hesbaye and the Hainault; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 172 and Beumann, 'Kurswechsel', 430 for his possession of the Hesbaye and Hainault.

³² *Annales Vedastini*, a. 895, 76; *DZwentibold*, nr. 7 and 17.

³³ This approach is applied by Barth in his investigation of Reginar's landed interest in *Herzog*, 31-33. For his first appearance as lay-abbot at Stavelot, see *Stavelot*, nr. 48. St-Servatius had been given to Trier by Arnulf on July 1st 889 and was returned to the archbishop following the short period of Reginar's rule on May 13th 898, see *DArnolf*, nr. 53, and *DZwentibold*, nrs. 20-21. For Echternach see Schieffer, 'Lotharingische Kanzlei', 31; *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 69 for the unnamed count and abbot

pagus of the Ardennes and, likely too, in the Hesbaye.³⁴ A comment made later by Folcuin of Lobbes, that Reginar allied with bishop Franco of Liège in the fight against the Northmen, strongly suggests that their association with one another was born of close proximity either in the Hainault, where Franco retained his possession of Lobbes, or in those lands stretching eastwards towards his bishopric itself, and that both men had the local capacity to meet the threat of the invaders in the regions surrounding the river Scheldt.³⁵ Overall, it does seem that Reginar's landed interests were focussed largely in the lowland regions of the Hainault, Hesbaye and Brabant – a view which is reinforced with a reminder of his close association with Baldwin II of Flanders in 895 – and that they stretched eastwards, too, towards the river Meuse itself. Reginar's possession of lands in these regions would explain his association with such a man as the count of Flanders. These lands were located in *pagi* that had fallen into the hands of Charles the Bald in 870, and even their return to the eastern kingdom in the agreement made at Ribemont in 880 does not seem to have disrupted this political orientation towards the western kingdom.

of St-Maximim which is held to be Reginar, see Parisot, *Lorraine*, 585; A. Eckel, *Charles le Simple* (Paris, 1899), 99; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 1 95; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 198.

³⁴ *Stavelot*, nr. 41, 49, 51; *Echternach*, nr. 163; *Die Urkunden Konrads I, Heinrichs I und Ottos I*, ed. T. Sickel, *MGH Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae I* (Berlin, 1879-84), nr. 318, included a list of older donations to the monastery of Nivelles and which included lands belonging to the Reginar family, '...similiter quidquid predicti Regennarii filius nomine Liechardus tradidit in pago Hasbaniensi in villa qui dicitur Gigolanham...'; Bernard, 'Le domaine ardennais', 12-13.

³⁵ Folcuin, *Gesta*, c. 1, 55 for the siting of Lobbes in the Hainault; and c. 16-17, 61-62 for the activities of the Vikings in the region of the Scheldt and in Brabant, and the response of Reginar and Franco, 'Per quam Northmanni in illo delati, licet in illis partibus cuncta depopularentur, plurimum tamen illi, qui littora Scaldi insederant,...similiter et cetera ecclesiae nostrae praedia, quae apud Brabantum erant prefusiora, hoc tempore exhausta sunt et exinanita...Tali ergo modo turbata ecclesiae pace, et firmamento regni posito in formidine, Franco praedictus episcopus, coactus iusta, quantum ad saeculares, et vere necessaria bella suscipere, accito sibi Reginerio quodam, quem Longum-collum vocant, strenuo et in bellicis rebus excercitato, hii frequenter in acie confligentes, perraro victi, multoties extitere victores'. For Franco's possession of both the bishopric and the abbacy, see *Annales Laubienses*, a. 887, 15. Later sources also thought Reginar was powerful in the Hainault, see *Vita Gerardi abbatis Broniensis*, *MGH SS*, XV, 666, '...atque Raginero Hainoensi comite...'.

The itineration of the Vikings on their military campaigns, and the nature of the Frankish response, strengthen the idea that those regions of western Lotharingia in which Reginar operated in the late ninth century looked instinctively to the west rather than to the east, and that geography played a part in defining this landscape. In 879, for example, a band of Vikings attacked the western bishopric of Théroutanne before heading east over the Scheldt to ravage the Brabant while, in 891, their campaign took them east from Noyon towards the river Meuse before once again returning over the Scheldt via the Brabant.³⁶ Similarly, the response of the Franks reflects the strength of geography in defining political landscapes. Regino records how in 880 the Vikings launched an attack upon the city of Tournai and the monasteries running along the river Scheldt. Their pillaging naturally took them into the Hainault, and the annalist records how it was at Thiméon that they inflicted serious losses upon a royal army under the leadership of Louis the Younger, who had come west in the hope of gaining that kingdom at the expense of the two young sons of Louis the Stammerer († April 10th 879).³⁷ Louis' main supporter in these schemes had been abbot Gauzlin of St-Denis and it was he who, following his failure to garner the necessary support that Louis required, once again turned his attentions towards the threat of the Vikings, and sought to co-ordinate a response which included those from across the river Scheldt, that is to say, in Lotharingia, 'Gozlinus vero abba et exercitus qui cum eo erat statuunt Nortmannos bellum inferre. Mittuntque ad eos qui trans Scaldum erant, ut die statuta venientes, hi ex una parte fluminis hique ex alia eosque delerent'.³⁸ Carolingian kings, too, often had to ignore

³⁶ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 879, 44-45 and a. 891, 69. Generally, on the Viking campaigns in Francia and the response, see S. Coupland, 'The Carolingian Army and the Struggle Against the Vikings', *Viator*, xxxv (2004), 49-70; C. Gillmor, 'War on the rivers: Viking numbers and mobility on the Seine and Loire, 841-886', *Viator*, xix (1988), 79-109.

³⁷ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 879, 115.

³⁸ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 880, 48.

artificial political frontiers in their fight against such a mobile enemy as the Vikings. Thus, in response to their threat in 891, king Arnulf pursued them back across the river Scheldt towards Arras while in 881, when the Vikings attacked the city of Cambrai itself, the young western king Louis III, fresh from his victory at Saucourt, pursued them into the *pagus Camaracensium*.³⁹

In the years leading up to 895, however, Reginar's orientation towards the west is explained less by the demands of geography, than by the lack of associations here with any of the central political sites of the Moselle valley. Admittedly, the great episcopal sites of this latter region had long-standing connections to Liège, Maastricht, and their environs; while the monastery of Echternach possessed lands both in Toxandria and the diocese of Utrecht.⁴⁰ Despite these associations, I have not uncovered any evidence which suggests that these sites possessed significant links to the regions west of the river Meuse.

This view is supported by the disposition of lands made in the mid ninth century by the widow Erkanfrida. In her will Erkanfrida sought to prepare for her post-obit commemoration and she outlined in it both the location of those lands whose sale would provide the wherewithal, and the monastic and episcopal beneficiaries who would then, through feasting and prayer, undertake the provisioning of her *memoria*, and that of her husband Nithard. Certainly, Erkanfrida had a number of lands at her disposal, and she sought to provide for her commemora-

³⁹ *Annales Vedastini*, a. 891, 69-70, 'Quod audiens Arnulfus rex velociter accurrit eosque usque trans Scaldum et propre Atrebatibus insecutus, sed eos non comprehendit, indeque rediit in regnum suum'; and a. 881, 51, 'Rex quoque adunato exercitu in pago Camaracensium venit castrumque sibi statuit in loco qui dicitur Strum ad debellationem Danorum'.

⁴⁰ Ewig, 'Das Trierer Land', 263, 266; Anton, *Trier*, 182-3.

tion at no fewer than twenty-six religious sites, but it is striking that, in both cases, her horizons stretched no further than the traditional heart-lands of Lotharingia and that she possessed neither the lands nor the desire to be commemorated at sites to the west of the river Meuse.⁴¹ In effect, Erkanfrida's world of 'privatised liturgical commemoration' reflected geographical divisions within the Lotharingian region, that is between those lands to the east of the river Meuse and those further to west, and helps to explain why, even in the final years of the ninth century, Reginar's own interests were propelled towards the western political scene rather than, as we might have expected, the kingdom to which he nominally belonged. It is this clear distinction which makes Reginar's role in 911 all the more interesting and demanding of explanation. What factors encouraged this shift of political perspective? As this chapter will argue further below, Reginar's actions in the year 911 were indicative not simply as a transformation in his personal fortunes, but in fact represented a fundamental change in Lotharingian geopolitical structures in the early years of the tenth century.

That, however, was to be a later development. Despite his switch to Zwentibold in 895, and his acquisition of valuable *Königsnähe*, Reginar remained the representative of a distinct aristocratic community with little by way of association to the dominant group inhabiting the Trier-Metz region. Like the rather limited aristocratic horizons revealed by Erkanfrida in her will, the picture painted too by Regino of Prüm in his *Chronicle* also reveals this particularly local aristocratic landscape. In his recitation of the feuds which rent the ranks of the Lotharingian aristocracy in the closing years of the ninth century, the gaze of the abbot of Prüm

⁴¹ For the will, Wampach, *UBMR*, nrs. 88 and 89; J. L. Nelson, 'The Wary Widow', in *Property and*

settled only briefly on Reginar. For Regino, the Lotharingian aristocracy was an intimate and local group, and Reginar, for all his acquisition of royal favour, still remained an outsider.

For the most part, Reginar's early political career was essentially that of the frontier aristocrat. Although his lands fell within the limits of the eastern kingdom following the agreement at Ribemont, the weight of the surviving evidence suggests that, until his switch to Zwentibold, Reginar's political horizons were shaped by his association to such local figures as the count of Flanders and faithful service to the king, Charles the Simple. Even following his switch of loyalty in 895, however, Reginar remained distinct from the dominant aristocratic group of the Moselle region, and played no part in the St-Goar negotiations which led to the acknowledgement of Louis the Child, or indeed in the battle against the king led by the Matfridinger counts Gerard and Matfrid. Taken together, however, it is precisely these continuing distinctions which make Reginar's apparently decisive role in 911 so interesting. How was it that this previously peripheral figure (both in a geographical and political sense) could achieve a position of leadership, and lever the *regnum* into the hands of Charles the Simple? Although the kingdom of Zwentibold had re-established the idea of the *regnum Lotharii* as a political unit and structure of rule, it is clear both from his overthrow and death in battle, and the subsequent incorporation of his kingdom into that of Louis the Child, that the idea had not fully achieved permanence. The crucial period of that development was to take place in the early years of the tenth century, and was characterised by the Conradiner Gebhard, who appears in a diploma of Louis the Child as *dux regni quod a multis*

Power in the Early Middle Ages, eds. W. Davies and P. Fouracre (Cambridge, 1995), 82-113, esp. 96-

Hlotharii dicitur.⁴² It was in the first decade of the tenth century that the idea of Lotharingia as a political organisation achieved a real degree of solidity, to such an extent, indeed, that the aristocracy could exploit it as a marker of identity without recourse to royal authority. It is to this process of development that discussion now turns.

5.3: Gebhard, *dux* of Lotharingia?

Louis the Child's acknowledgement as king by a sizeable faction from within the ranks of the Lotharingian aristocracy presented the new royal regime with a set of problems not dissimilar to those faced earlier by Zwentibold. The main problem remained the establishment of an effective and acceptable form of royal authority in a region that continued to be dominated by an assertive and fissile aristocracy whose power had only recently been demonstrated to Louis' benefit by their successful opposition to Zwentibold's own attempts to create a dominant kingship in the region.⁴³ The problem for the new rulers of the east was how to establish credible authority over a region whose leading aristocratic figures had been politicised by Zwentibold's actions and who now possessed something of a common concern in protecting their perceived traditional rights and possessions.

Yet Louis, following the necessary journeys to secure the *regnum Lotharii* in the course of 900, made no more than four further appearances in the remaining ten

100; Nightingale, *Monasteries and Patrons*, 190.

⁴² *DLouis the Child*, nr. 20.

⁴³ Mohr, *Lothringen*, 12.

years of his reign, two in 902 and one each in 906 and 908.⁴⁴ The result was that the king became a more distant figure, and although it is difficult to fully understand the implications of this increased distance upon aristocratic politics in the *regnum Lotharii*, it is clear that access to the king for the Lotharingians was now a much more unpredictable affair: Louis issued only 15 diplomas to such recipients in the course of his reign, while both Zwentibold and Arnulf had each managed to issue 28 diplomas to Lotharingian beneficiaries.⁴⁵

In addition to this problem of royal accessibility, the local aristocracy remained a dangerously fissile and unpredictable body. For all that some common cause had been encouraged by the need to oppose Zwentibold, the latent tensions simmering within the ranks of the aristocracy began again to boil over once the king had been removed from the scene.⁴⁶ In 901 Count Stephen, who had avenged the death of Count Megingoz by striking down the murderer Alberich in 896, found himself the latest victim of the feud, dying of the wounds inflicted by a poisoned arrow shot by an anonymous figure through the window of his own fortified residence.⁴⁷ The continuing influence of neighbouring kings in the *regnum Lotharii* certainly encouraged this potential for conflict within the ranks of the aristocracy. For all that Charles the Simple had cooperated in the agreement made at St-Goar to replace Zwentibold with Louis the Child, his wide ranging links of association and consanguinity with many of the region's *optimates* made him a potentially credible and dangerous alternative to east Frankish royal lordship at some point in the future.

⁴⁴ *DLouis the Child*, nr. 13, 16, 18, 49-50, 57; Schieffer, 'Kanzlei', 110; Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*, 393.

⁴⁵ Schieffer, 'Kanzlei', 109-10; Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*, 393.

⁴⁶ Parisse, 'Naissance', 41f.

⁴⁷ For the events of the feud see Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 892, 140; 896, 144; 901, 149. For discussion see Le Jan, 'L'Aristocratie Lotharingienne', 210-212.

Certainly, Reginar remains the most visible of those aristocrats with links to the western kingdom, but even for the Matfridinger, who had supported Zwentibold against Charles the Simple in 898, the eventuality of west Frankish royal lordship may not have been an entirely unwelcome prospect. Charles had cultivated connections with Bishop Stephen of Liège as early as 896 when this member of the Matfridinger family had been abbot of the monastery of St-Mihiel near Toul, and as with Reginar, such associations may have been encouraged by the close degree of kinship which existed between the western king and a number of the Lotharingian *optimates*.⁴⁸ Despite the success in removing Zwentibold, the problems faced by the eastern court in the *regnum Lotharii* were not insubstantial. The problem remained one of providing an effective royal authority in the face of a fissile and potentially unreliable aristocratic community. The establishment of a duchy has traditionally been seen as the eastern court's answer to these problems of aristocratic access and royal control in the *regnum Lotharii*.⁴⁹

The purpose of the late Carolingian – Ottonian duchy has undergone a recent re-examination and this has important implications in understanding the nature of the ducal dignity apparently awarded to the Conradiner Count Gebhard in the early years of Louis the Child's reign, and which was advertised in one royal diploma as *dux regni quod a multis Hlotharii dicitur*.⁵⁰ One historiographical perspective has been

⁴⁸ DCharles the Simple, nr. 11; Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 171f; Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 536; Bauer, *Lotharingien*, 333f.

⁴⁹ The historiography concerned with the dukes is vast but for Lotharingia in particular see Mohr, *Lothringen*; Boshof, 'Lotharingien-Lothringen' and Schneidmüller, 'Regnum und Ducatus'. In general see the illuminating recent studies by Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens*, and his 'Volksbildung und Herzogtum in Sachsen', *MIÖG*, cviii (2000), 68-84; Goetz, "Dux" und "Ducatus", and his, 'Abgrenzung politischer Räume: die Ausbildung der Herzogtümer im Ostfränkischen Reich um 900', in *Les élites et leurs espaces: mobilité, rayonnement, domination (VI^e – XI^e s.)*, *Colloque international organisé par la Mission historique française en Allemagne et al. (Göttingen, 3-5 mars 2005)* (forthcoming).

⁵⁰ DLouis the Child, nr. 20.

to see the duchy as a means of canalising and controlling powerful regional aristocratic forces behind leading figures, the dukes, who represented and exercised royal authority in the regions, and still remained representatives for each of these local political communities.⁵¹ One result of this approach is to focus debate on the still unresolved questions over the range of powers and responsibilities transferred by the crown to the *dux* for exercise on its behalf. Although an older perspective that located the fundamental basis of ducal power upon tribal origins has now been superseded,⁵² enquiry is still dominated by questions about specific royal prerogatives exercised by the duke on behalf of the crown: did he hold assemblies, did he possess authority over royal monasteries, were his powers exercised over the entirety of the *regnum* or only over a limited part; and upon what material basis was ducal authority constructed?⁵³

There has been something of a reaction against the tendency to observe 'constitutional' continuity in the makeup of the early tenth century duchies. As early as the 1930s, Geoffrey Barraclough was warning against 'the tendency to presuppose the existence...of rigid, mature, well defined institutions' and the rights and privileges which apparently pertained to it.⁵⁴ Hans-Werner Goetz provided an all-out assault upon this constitutional position of the dukes in his important book in the late

⁵¹ T. Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Age, 800-1056* (Harlow, 1991), 130ff.

⁵² H.-W. Goetz, 'Die "deutschen Stämme" als Forschungsproblem', *Zur Geschichte der Gleichung „germanisch-deutsch“*. *Sprache und Namen, Geschichte und Institutionen*, ed. H. Beck, D. Geuenich, H. Steuer and D. Hakelberg (Berlin and New York, 2004), 229-253, at 241-3.

⁵³ Mohr, *Lothringen*, 14 and Boshof, 'Lotharingen-Lothringen', 143f; Reuter, *Germany*, 130ff all see the dukes as being royally delegated dignities. For convenient discussions of the debate over the nature of the dukes see G. Barraclough, 'The Problem of the Duchies', *Mediaeval Germany, 911-1250. Essays by German Historians*, I, (Oxford, 1938), 27-46; Schneidmüller, 'Regnum und Ducatus', 96-100; Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens*, 9ff; id, 'Volksbildung', 71; M. Werner, 'Der Herzog von Lothringen in salischer Zeit', in ed. S. Weinfurter and H. Kluger, *Die Salier und das Reich* (Sigmaringen, 1991), vol. 1, 367-473, 375-6; Goetz, 'Abgrenzung'.

⁵⁴ Barraclough, 'Duchies', 27-32.

1970s, and his most recent work has continued in this vein by seeking to uncover how these figures sought to provide their areas of political action with a degree of real control and spatial cohesion.⁵⁵

The recent work of Matthias Becher on Saxon ducal power has added a new dimension to the vistas earlier opened up by Goetz. The great strength of his book has been to reveal the lack of any institutional or ethnic basis behind the rising fortunes of the Liudolfinger in Saxony.⁵⁶ These figures continued to operate as imperial aristocrats whose dominance over their 'home' *regna* was never complete, and who continued to pursue interests in other parts of the east Frankish kingdom.⁵⁷ As Becher argues, it was not until the reign of Otto I (936-973) that Hermann Billung was permitted to establish a duchy based on recently reformed Saxon traditions.⁵⁸ If Saxony is used as a barometer, therefore, early tenth-century ducal power was not an all-encompassing delegation of royal authority into the hands of a duke. Certainly, such figures remained the most powerful aristocrats of their regions, and were recognised as such by the court, but this recognition of *de facto* power should not be misinterpreted, at least in early tenth century Saxony, as a *de iure* exercise of authority over the *regnum* on behalf of the crown.

The situations of other ducal figures suggest that it is methodologically questionable to make general conclusions about the nature of the dignity from one specific example. The picture of ducal power in Bavaria for example looks somewhat different from that in Liudolfinger Saxony. Certainly, the great families

⁵⁵ Goetz, "*Dux*" und "*Ducatus*"; id, 'Abgrenzung'.

⁵⁶ Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens*, 25-66.

⁵⁷ Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens*, 158-194.

⁵⁸ Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens*, 195ff; id, 'Volksbildung', 84.

of both regions shared common characteristics. Both the Liudolfinger in Saxony and the Liutpoldinger in Bavaria were related to the Carolingians, and both owed their initial rise to prominence to royal patronage. Yet, for all that these connections resulted in the allocation of such lofty titles as *dux Boemanorum*, as Liutpold of Bavaria was designated in one surviving original diploma from the reign of Louis the Child, both families did not rule supremely over their territories.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, Bavarian ducal power almost certainly achieved a degree of intensity which went unmatched elsewhere.⁶⁰ It was in particular during the rule of Arnulf, who had succeeded to his father's position of political prominence in 907, that Bavarian ducal power reached its apogee. Arnulf famously had his lordship expressed in a style mimicking royal practice, *Arnolfus divina ordinante providentia dux Baioariorum et etiam adiacentium regionum*, and it does seem that this confidence was matched in practice by a real degree of authority over his *regnum*.⁶¹ The *dux* certainly exercised leverage over the Bavarian episcopate, and exploited both public and royal monastic lands in the provisioning of his supporters.⁶² Indeed, such was the rarity of a royal visit to Bavaria during this period that it is possible to speak of a real separation between the region and the east Frankish kingdom.⁶³ The importance of the Bavarian example however is for present purposes the

⁵⁹ For Bavaria during the reign of Louis the Child and the background of the Liutpoldinger see Airlie, 'Nearly Men', 39 and Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 621-5.

⁶⁰ Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 622. For a wider discussion see K. Brunner, 'Die fränkischen Fürstentitel im neunten und zehnten Jahrhundert', *Intitulatio II, Lateinische Herrscher- und Fürstentitel im neunten und zehnten Jahrhundert*, ed. H. Wolfram (Vienna-Cologne-Graz, 1973), 179-327, at 243-6 and Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens*, 199-200. Arnulf's regal status was proclaimed also by the *Fragmentum de Arnulfo duce*, ed. P. Jaffé, *MGH SS*, xvii (Hanover, 1861), 570, 'de progenie imperatorum et regum est ortus'.

⁶¹ K. Reindel, *Die bayerischen Luitpoldinger 893-989. Sammlung und Erläuterung der Quellen* (Munich, 1953), nr. 48, cited in Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 623 and n. 1080 for the most likely date of issue of this diploma as 908-913.

⁶² Reuter, *Germany*, 133-4; Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens*, 221-224; Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 624.

⁶³ Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 625.

extraordinary degree of ducal power that Arnulf was able to exercise in general over the Bavarian *regnum*.⁶⁴ His authority ought however to stand as an exceptional demonstration of ducal power in action, and thus as a warning against applying his example as the yardstick upon which to measure the competencies of the other ducal figures of the early tenth-century east Frankish kingdom.

The title *dux* conceals a variety of styles in the exercise of ducal power at the beginning of the tenth century. The issue is confused somewhat more by the fact that these ducal figures were not necessarily titled as *duces* by the contemporary source material. The royal chancery much preferred to continue referring to these men as *comites*. Although Liutpold of Bavaria was for example referred to on one occasion as *marchio* by King Arnulf, *comes* remained the title applied most frequently by the royal chancery, while in the reign of Louis of Child, *marchio* was not used at all in reference to his rank in any surviving original diploma, which were again all dominated by the use of *comes*.⁶⁵ A similar trend can be seen both in Liudolfinger Saxony and, importantly for our Lotharingian perspective, in Lotharingia where the Conradiner count Gebhard appeared as *dux* in the early years of the tenth century.⁶⁶ His appearance as *dux* in an original diploma of Louis the Child means that he has been considered as the first official duke of Lotharingia.⁶⁷ As with similar examples of Liutpold in Bavaria and the Liudolfinger in Saxony, the deployment of the title

⁶⁴ This is not to deny, of course, that Liutpoldinger power was concentrated on a few key areas, in particular, around the see of Eichstatt and in Carinthia, see, Goetz, 'Abgrenzung'.

⁶⁵ For the *marchio* title, *DArnulf*, nr. 162 and *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 27 and 42; for the title *comes*, *DArnulf*, nrs. 138, 148, 168, 173; *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 9, 12, 26, 28, 31, 39; for his inclusion in a list of other *comites*, see *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 44, 53; Brunner, 'Fürstentitel', 241-2.

⁶⁶ Brunner, 'Fürstentitel', 309, and. n. 62 for the diploma material; Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens*, 67ff.

⁶⁷ Brunner, 'Fürstentitel', 289.

dux on this occasion remains however an exception to the usual chancery practice of referring to Gebhard as *comes*.⁶⁸

Taken together, these initial observations suggest that the ducal power exercised by Gebhard in the *regnum Lotharii* was probably of a less defined nature than previously thought.⁶⁹ On the one hand, the title *dux* itself concealed a varying number of meanings and competencies exercised by men distinguished by the title while, on the other hand, the evidence strongly suggests that whatever authority these men did exercise in their regions, it was not delegated power pertaining to an official ducal institution: the title *dux* appears far too rarely in royal diplomas to seriously have been the defining institution of their power. Ducal power, moreover, varied in intensity across the constituent *regna* of the kingdom. All of these provisos need consideration in any investigation of Gebhard's position in the *regnum Lotharii* during the first decade of the tenth century.

What then was the nature of Gebhard's ducal position in the *regnum Lotharii*? Certainly, both Gebhard and his brother Conrad quickly established a dominant position in the *regnum Lotharii* in the early years of King Louis' reign. At the level of basic power politics this dominance was based on their possession of the key monastic *honor* of St-Maximin at Trier, whose vast landed endowment made it a key player in the politics of the *regnum*, the monastery of Oeren, which too was

⁶⁸ *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 17, 18, 23, 35, 48, 53, 55, 57. We should note however that only nrs. 23, 53 and 55 survive as original documents. Even this small sample suggests however that chancery practice was to use the title *comes* rather than the grander *dux*.

⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the older perspective of ducal rule over the *regnum* has been reiterated recently by M. Parisse, 'Lotharingia', in Reuter, ed. *NCMH*, III, 310-327.

located in the environs of Trier, and possibly also Chèvremont in the diocese of Liège.⁷⁰

This position of landed strength was a reflection of Conradiner power and supremacy at court, and both men acted as intercessors on behalf of Lotharingians on the look-out for royal patronage.⁷¹ Conrad acted as the main intercessor on behalf of petitioners from the *regnum Lotharii* in the early years of Louis' reign but from 902 it was Gebhard, who intervened in this year alongside his brother on behalf of the church of Trier, who now emerged as the dominant Conradiner representative for the Lotharingians.⁷²

Conrad's retreat into the background as an intercessor for Lotharingian petitioners in the months leading up to the declaration of his brother as *dux* of the *regnum Lotharii* in the summer of 903 does suggest that Gebhard was being intentionally set up as the major representative of Conradiner power in that *regnum*. Indeed, other evidence does strengthen the idea that contemporaries perceived a connection between Gebhard and the *regnum Lotharii*. This is inferred from an entry made into the commemoration book of the monastery of Remiremont shortly after the death of Gebhard, who fell in battle against the Magyars on August 13th 910.⁷³ The entry was headed by *dux* Gebhard and contained 11 names, 'Gebehardi duci, Hidda, Riquinus, Cristianus, Raginfridus, Norbertus, Giralt, Freming, Heigart,

⁷⁰ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 906, 151; *Libellus de rebus Treverensibus*, c. 14; Parisot, *Lorraine*, 560. This possession of key monastic *honores* in the environs of Trier underlines my argument of the city becoming increasingly the political centre of the *regnum Lotharii* at the close of the ninth century, see above 183ff.

⁷¹ In general for intervention at the court of Louis the Child see Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 584-586.

⁷² Conrad's interventions: *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 3, 7, 13, 17. Gebhard's interventions: *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 17, 18, 55, 57, 70.

⁷³ For the date of his death see *Remiremont*, 14v, part 1, 29, '+ x kal. iul. migravit Gebardus dux de hac luce'.

Uuarimber, Gunthilt'.⁷⁴ From our perspective, however, the significance of the entry lies in its location within the Remiremont commemoration book itself. The entry appeared as a palimpsest upon a portion of the manuscript where a notice of the death of king Zwentibold had earlier been placed.⁷⁵ It is therefore plausible that the scribe responsible for the insertion of the memorial entry considered the place originally allocated for the commemoration of Zwentibold was actually a more suitable place for the *dux* of the *regnum Lotharii*. It is also significant that Gebhard's *memoria* was to be kept alive alongside that of certain *optimates* of the *regnum Lotharii*. The same entry included Richuin, the count of Verdun, and Christian, in all likelihood the Lotharingian count who offered his loyalty to king Henry I in 925.⁷⁶ It is suggestive, finally, that Gebhard's death was recorded in the Remiremont necrology alongside just one other name: that of Gerard, the former foe of the *dux* in the *regnum Lotharii*. It does seem that contemporaries considered Gebhard to have possessed a particular association with the *regnum Lotharii*.

Yet, for all that Gebhard held a position of distinction that was explicitly linked with the *regnum Lotharii*, it is clear that he did not rule over that territory as a representative or replacement for royal authority. As we have already seen, from about 902 he certainly became the dominant Conradiner target for aspiring petitioners from the *regnum Lotharii*, but it is equally clear that he did not represent the only avenue of exploration open to those seeking the fruits of royal benevolence. That Gebhard possessed a much more fluid and ill-defined position can be seen in four of the diplomas in which he intervened for a Lotharingian petitioner. In each

⁷⁴ *Remiremont*, 3v, part 18, 4. For discussion, Althoff, *Amicitiae und Pacta*, 258-259, and chapter 13 generally for the associates of the Conradiner.

⁷⁵ Althoff, *Amicitiae und Pacta*, 258.

⁷⁶ Althoff, *Amicitiae und Pacta*, 259.

Gebhard intervened alongside a second participant in the transaction.⁷⁷ The only document in which he intervened on his own account was issued for the monastery of Chèvremont but this was a Conradiner possession.⁷⁸

Nor was Gebhard always a necessary destination for Lotharingian petitioners. The royal diplomas show that both Bishop Stephen of Liège and Count Reginar could directly petition the king for his patronage, while the great episcopal figures of the kingdom, also the dominant personalities at the court, Hatto of Mainz, Ratbod of Trier, Adalbero of Augsburg and the royal chancellor Salomon of Constance, all operated as intercessors for Lotharingian petitioners at the court of Louis the Child.⁷⁹ That Lotharingian petitioners could look elsewhere at court for support of their ambitions reflects the fact that Gebhard did not rule over the *regnum Lotharii* and mediate access to the political centre. His itinerary, as far as it can be reconstructed, does not suggest that he ever sought to cultivate any particular association with the inhabitants of the region, or that he sought to give credence to any claims to rulership, by making progresses around the *regnum*.⁸⁰ Of the five diplomas in which Gebhard appeared as an intercessor for a Lotharingian petitioner, two were issued at Frankfurt and Ingelheim, showing that these petitioners still had to seek out potential intercessors at the royal court, while the remainder were issued at just two sites in the *regnum Lotharii* itself, Aachen and Wadgassen near Metz.⁸¹ These two sites remain

⁷⁷ *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 17 (with Conrad); 55, 70 (with Archbishop Hatto of Mainz); 57 (with Reginar).

⁷⁸ *DLouis the Child*, nr. 18.

⁷⁹ *DLouis the Child*, nr. 36 (Stephen of Liège); 49 (Hatto and Ratbod for St-Evre); 50 (Reginar for an exchange between a certain Liutard and the church of Liège); 59 (Hatto, Adalbero and Salomon for Trier). Useful discussions of the careers of these episcopal figures can be found in Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 537-547.

⁸⁰ For comments on the royal progress as both a symbolic and actual taking of possession, Bernhardt, *Itinerant Kingship*, 43.

⁸¹ *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 55 (Frankfurt); 70 (Ingelheim); 18, 57 (Aachen); 17 (Wadgassen).

indeed the only locations in the *regnum Lotharii* at which we can positively identify Gebhard, although he almost certainly accompanied the king to a general assembly held at Metz itself in 906.⁸²

Gebhard moreover never remained simply a potential intercessor at court for Lotharingian petitioners. His known itinerary can be extended to include two other east Frankish locations, the palace of Forchheim and Theres where, in addition to Frankfurt, he intervened for a series of eastern petitioners, the bishopric of Würzburg and the monasteries of St-Gall and Kaiserswerth.⁸³ In regard to both the extent of his itinerary and those who benefited from his interventions at court, Gebhard's career continues therefore to correspond to a traditional pattern of a member of the *Reichsaristokratie*. For all that both he and his family were endowed with *honores* in the *regnum Lotharii*, their continuing possession of lands and offices elsewhere in the eastern kingdom, and their leading role in the 'regency council' of Louis the Child, meant that their political horizons were necessarily of a broader regnal nature.

This is well demonstrated by events that unfolded in the course of 906. That year was to see the final and decisive victory of the Conradiner over the Babenberger, their great rivals for political dominance in central Francia. Events began however with a Conradiner assault upon their main rivals in the *regnum Lotharii*, the Matfridinger counts Gerard and Matfrid, who had earlier sought to dispossess Gebhard and Conrad from their monastic *honores*. Yet, as Regino recorded, leadership of the Conradiner response was not awarded to Gebhard, which

⁸² Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 906, 152.

⁸³ *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 20 (St-Gall); 23 (Würzburg); 35 (Kaiserswerth). Significantly, Kaiserswerth was held at this time by Gebhard's brother Conrad, while another brother Rudolf possessed the see of

we might have expected in his guise as *dux regni quod a multis Hlotharii dicitur*, but rather to his nephew Conrad, ‘Cuonradus comes filium suum Cuonradum misit cum armatorum non modica manu, ut irruerent super Gerardum et fratrem eius Matfridum, eo quod honores suos et Gebhardi fratris, videlicet possessionem sancti Maximini et sanctae Mariae ad Horrea, violenter invasissent’.⁸⁴

Gebhard and the elder Conrad were in the meantime left with the job of protecting their family lands to the east of the Rhine from the threat of attack by the Babenberger. While Conrad took responsibility for the defence of their estates in Hesse, Gebhard was entrusted with defending the Wetterau, ‘Cuonradus senior in Hessa in loco, qui dicitur Frideslar, cum multa turba peditum et equitum residebat, crebras incursiones Adalberti suspectas habens; frater vero eius Gebhardus in Wedereiva cum omnibus, quos sibi adsociare poterat, eiusdem Adalberti prestolabatur repentinam inruptionem’.⁸⁵ Lying to the north of the city of Würzburg, whose bishopric had been held formerly by the Babenberger but which had been put into the hands of the Conradiner Rudolf in 892, the Wetterau was a potential flash-point in the rivalry between the two competing families. The region’s strategic importance was underlined by Gebhard’s continuing tenure of the county throughout Louis’ reign, and his evident focus there in what was a period of severe danger for the general fortunes of his family, shows that his political horizons continued to be formed by the concerns of the *Reichsaristokratie*.⁸⁶

Würzburg. For Conrad’s tenure of Kaiserswerth; *DLouis the Child*, nr. 35; for Rudolf’s tenure of Würzburg; Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 892, 140.

⁸⁴ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 906, 150-51.

⁸⁵ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 906, 151.

⁸⁶ For Gebhard’s tenure of the county of the Wetterau, *DLouis the Child*, nr. 71.

The Conradiner certainly enjoyed a privileged position in the *regnum Lotharii*, and it may be that for all its ambiguity the title *dux* conveyed a degree of authority which, alongside its specific connection to that kingdom, may have assisted the court in its attempts to strengthen its influence over the great aristocrats of the region. Significantly, the distinction between the *regnum Lotharii* and the other regions of the kingdom, which had first been made in the diploma which allocated the *dux* title to Gebhard, continued to be articulated in other diplomas issued by the king; this suggests that the court did make deliberate attempts to delineate the membership of the aristocracy of that region in specifically territorial terms, and which could then be allocated its own royal representative. In late 909 for example Louis confirmed the monastery of Chèvremont's possession of lands at Mortier which had been given initially, so the diploma issued on the occasion recorded, to a certain Roing by Zwentibold following the collapse of his support in 900, 'qualiter frater noster Zuentipulchus, postquam a regni gubernatione procures regni Lothariensis demiserint'.⁸⁷ These attempts of the court to define the shape of a distinct Lotharingian aristocracy evidently met with some success. For, as Regino explicitly recorded, when the Conradiner moved against counts Gerard and Matfrid in the summer of 906, Conrad mobilised his armed support from within the *regnum Lotharii*, 'quibus exercitus ex regno Lotharii sociatus est'.⁸⁸

Despite this sense of a general but recognisable position of leadership in the *regnum Lotharii*, Gebhard's ducal power was clearly neither official, in the sense that he ruled over the inhabitants of the *regnum*, nor indeed institutional, that in a real

⁸⁷ *DLouis the Child*, nr. 70; see also nr. 55 issued for the church of Liège in 907 and on whose behalf intervened Hatto, Gebhard and 'caeteris principibus illius regni', i.e. the *regnum Lotharii*.

⁸⁸ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 906, 151.

way, the *dux* title itself brought into the hands of him who possessed it a defined set of competencies and responsibilities. This can be seen at its most basic level by the need for Conradiner power to be enforced militarily upon recalcitrant members of the Lotharingian aristocracy, but it can be seen too in the less dramatic circumstances of the date-*formulae* of Lotharingian private charters where Gebhard's ducal title was not once acknowledged as a position of political leadership.⁸⁹ Ultimately, the significance of Gebhard's ducal position upon the continuing development of the *regnum Lotharii* as a coherent political structure does not lie in any institutional or quasi-royal authority conveyed by the title *dux* itself. The significance of the Conradiner duchy in this process lies elsewhere, and to understand this we must return initially to 903 and the diploma in which Gebhard was titled *dux regni quod a multis Hlotharii dicitur*.

The document issued on that occasion was the only time that Gebhard was referred to as *dux* by the royal chancery.⁹⁰ It is a document, moreover, in which the title appears quite unexpectedly. The beneficiary was Bishop Salomon of Constance, and so the diploma stands outside the group of Lotharingian petitioners for whom Gebhard intervened, and towards whom therefore we could have reasonably expected the title *dux* to be directed. Given the exceptional occurrence of the title in this diploma, and the fact that this document is the point from which all discussion of the Lotharingian ducal office proceeds, it is necessary to ask whether the appearance

⁸⁹ These surviving charters show that in the period of Gebhard's ducal title in Lotharingia the traditional form of dating by citing the regnal years of the currently ruling king remained in use, see *Gorze*, nrs. 86-87; *LUB*, nrs. 139, 141a, 141b; *St-Mihiel*, nrs. 20-21; *Stavelot*, nrs. 49-51; *UBMR*, nr. 151.

⁹⁰ Brunner, 'Fürstentitel', 289; for further comments on this charter see W. Kienast, *Der Herzogstitel in Frankreich und Deutschland (9.-12. Jahrhundert)* (Munich-Vienna, 1968), 314; Schneidmüller, 'Regnum und Ducatus', 100-101; Bauer, *Lotharingen*, 53f; Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 631.

of the title on this occasion was the product of quite specific political circumstances in the summer of 903 rather than, as has been thought, an expression of an established structure of rule through which Gebhard controlled Lotharingia in the name of the king.

At first glance the diploma is an unremarkable document in which the young king Louis confirmed for Bishop Salomon of Constance all the privileges bestowed by previous Carolingian kings and emperors upon the monastery of St-Gall.⁹¹ The content of the document reveals, however, that this was an extraordinary occasion. This demonstration of royal munificence took place, so the text states, ‘per suggestionem fidelium nostrorum’. The appearance of several intercessors in diplomas from Louis’ reign should not surprise us and ought to be expected given the circumstances of the king’s young age, and the need for all favoured political factions to gain *Königsnähe*.⁹² Nevertheless, the sheer number of intercessors mobilised on the occasion of the grant to Salomon highlights the exceptional nature of the occasion on which it was issued. In total 7 bishops and 19 lay aristocrats approached the king on behalf of Salomon: the *episcopi* Hatto of Mainz, Waldo of Freising, Adalbero of Augsburg, Erchanpold of Eichstätt, Theotolf of Chür, Tuto of Regensburg, Einhard of Speyer, and the *comites* Conrad, Gebhard and Conrad the Younger, Burchard *marchio Thuringionum*, Burchard *marchio Curiensis Raetiae*, Burchard *filius Walahonis*, Liutpold *dux Boemannorum*, Adalbert, Pabo, Odalrich, Arnulf, Hug, Reginbold, Adalgoz, Ruochere, Liutfrid, Cotedanc, Ernst and Erlolf.⁹³

⁹¹ For a convenient discussion of Salomon’s career, Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 544-547.

⁹² For intervention see Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 584-586.

⁹³ ‘...quorum nomina sunt: Hatho, Uualto, Adalpero, Erchanpold, Theotolf, Tuto et Einhart venerabiles episcopi, comites vero Chonrat, Kebehard dux regni quod a multis Hlotharii dicitur, Purchart marchio Thuringionum, Adalpreht, Purchart marchio Curiensis raetiae, Liutpold dux

In total, 26 *fideles* petitioned the king to grant his confirmation for St-Gall. A brief look at the diplomatic material prior to this stage of Louis' reign highlights the extraordinariness of this number of intercessors. Certainly multiple intercessors were not uncommon in Louis' reign but in the nineteen diplomas issued prior to that for Salomon, at most only four appeared before the king in any one document.⁹⁴ The appearance of 26 named intercessors in the St-Gall diploma strongly suggests that the occasion of its issue was of extreme political significance.⁹⁵

That event was certainly the culmination of the most recent outbreak of conflict between the Conradiner, the dominant faction at court, and the Babenberger. A battle between the two factions in 902 had resulted in the death of the Babenberger brothers Henry and Adalhard (the former was killed in battle, the latter was beheaded on the orders of Gebhard), and the Conradiner Eberhard, who died from wounds received in the fighting, 'in quo certamine Heinricus interfectus est et Adalardus captus est et post modicum iussu Gebehardi decollatus est. Everhardus etiam multis vulneribus confossus in prelio cecidit, ubi finito conflictu inter cadavera occisorum a suis inventus domum reportatur et paucis interpositis diebus et ipse moritur'.⁹⁶

Despite the losses sustained by the Babenberger, their remaining representative Adalbert launched a second assault against the Conradiner early in the next year, 903. His target was, according to Regino, the bishopric of Würzburg

Boemanorum, Pabo, Adalrich, Arnolf, Chonrat, Hug, Reginpold, Adalgoz, Ruochere, Purchart filius Vualahonis, Liutfrid, Cotedanc, Ernst et Erlolf...

⁹⁴ *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 12, 15, 19 with 4 intercessors; 3, 9, 13 with 3 intercessors.

⁹⁵ There may of course have been many others who participated in the intercession without having been named in the document. A spurious diploma purporting to be issued on the same occasion lists 5 individuals not included in the St-Gall diploma (Bishop Deotoloh of Worms and the *comites* Lutolf, Hessi, Egino and Megenwart) and suggests that the gathering at that assembly may have been much larger. For this spurious document see *DLouis the Child*, nr. 82.

⁹⁶ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 902, 149.

which had formerly belonged to the Babenberger but now was in the hands of the Conradiner Rudolf, ‘Adalbertus Ruodulfum episcopum de Wirziburgensi ecclesia fugat et res et possessions prefatae ecclesiae crudelissime depopulatur, filios etiam Everhardi simul cum matre a propriis hereditatibus et honoribus regio munere concessis exire compellens ultra Spechtheshart secedere cogit’.⁹⁷

Although Regino provided no further record of the course of the feud for this year it is clear that the St-Gall diploma represented the first stage in the Conradiner response to a renewed Babenberger challenge. The document was concerned ostensibly with confirming the privileges, immunity and royal protection possessed by the monastery of St-Gall. Nevertheless, its issue at Forchheim, which lay close to Würzburg and thus at the very heart of the region which had seen the recent clashes between the Conradiner and their enemies, suggests strongly that the court had come to the vicinity in order to offer material support in the fight against the Babenberger.⁹⁸ This would seem to tie with Regino’s record that the Conradiner resident in Würzburg fled across Spessart Mountains in the face of the Babenberger attack. Moreover, it is certainly significant that this occasion represented the first royal visit to Forchheim since the king’s acknowledgement there in 900, and that it lasted a full four months or more, culminating in the general assembly at which the St-Gall diploma was issued.⁹⁹

The text of the St-Gall diploma itself offers some support for the idea that it

⁹⁷ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 903, 149.

⁹⁸ Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 599.

⁹⁹ *DLouis the Child*, nr. 19 issued at Forchheim on February 14th 903 for Bishop Tuto of Regensburg immediately precedes the St-Gall diploma which was issued on June 24th. B-M, nrs. 2004, 2004a, 2005.

was the challenges of the Babenberger that provided the context for the Forchheim assembly. It was clearly with the current political challenges of the Babenberger in mind that this diploma recounted an earlier period of resistance to the crown. Salomon, according to the text, had succeeded to the abbacy of St-Gall following the deposition of its previous rebellious abbot Bernhard, ‘...cuius suis culpis exigentibus, quia Pernharto regiae maiestati resistenti et regni alieni invasori favit, abbatia sua ablata est...’, and it certainly seems that this message of triumphant royal power was intended by the court at a moment of considerable political challenge. The lessons of recent political history were here being used as a response, and the example of Bernhard was that challenges to royal authority ended in failure.

The St-Gall diploma was produced at a moment of crisis. The Babenberger had successfully pursued the Conradiner from Würzburg, and the court had in response travelled to Forchheim in a clear demonstration of political and military dominance. These underlying themes were expressed through the example of Bernhard of St-Gall in the diploma produced for that monastery towards the end of the court’s stay at Forchheim. The court evidently sought to advertise messages of royal authority to the assembly political community gathered for the general assembly at Forchheim. The St-Gall document, and the messages contained therein, ought to be seen as a product of this response on the part of the court to a moment of serious political crisis. This means that the title *dux*, which was applied to Gebhard in only this one diploma, was employed as part of this discourse of political response, and that its appearance in this document actually distorts the picture of late-Carolingian control of the *regnum Lotharii*. The appearance of *dux regni quod a multis Hlotharii dicitur* in the St-Gall diploma may say less about the nature of

Carolingian control of Lotharingia in the early tenth century as it does about one particular response to political crisis faced by the Conradiner-backed court of Louis the Child in 903.

Titles like *dux*, *marchio* and *comes* served to indicate rank within a royal hierarchy at the head of which sat the king. There is a clear sense in the St-Gall diploma that titles were being used as part of the court's response to the current challenges of the Babenberger. Yet, the appearance of such titles should not be seen as expressions of separatist regional power but rather as an expression of regnal solidarity against the current actions of the Babenberger. Indeed, the challenge facing the Carolingians had always been one of knitting together the various *regna* and regions of an expanded empire, and the various provinces listed in the St-Gall document were about expressing regnal solidarity through the diversity of the kingdom: the king has his *fideles* all around him and all come to him, in the words of the diploma, 'de diversis regni nostri finibus'. This perspective gains force when considered alongside a second diploma issued shortly after that for St-Gall. In early July 903 the court moved to Theres and there issued a diploma in which confiscated Babenberger properties were awarded to the church of Würzburg.

Again, a sizeable number of *fideles* intervened with the king, but from our perspective the important aspect of this occasion was the means by which the court undertook to conduct the transaction, 'ut quasdam res iuris nostri, quae Adalharti et Heinrici fuerunt et ob nequitiae eorum magnitudinem iudicio Franchorum, Alamannorum, Baouariorum, Thuringionum seu Saxonium legaliter in nostrum ius

publicatae sunt'.¹⁰⁰ Ultimately, the legitimacy of this grant was based on its royal provenance, but important still was the judgement of the *gentes* of the *regnum*: the Franks, Alamans, Bavarians, Thuringians and Saxons. Even in this moment of strong and assertive royal authority, an allusion to the regions of the kingdom was a necessary statement of legitimacy. It was not about regional separatism, but about expressing the consensual and constituent nature of the kingdom, and its mobilisation against the rebellious Babenberger. This offers an explanation for the appearance of Gebhard's ducal title in the St-Gall diploma. We have already seen how the idea of the *regnum Lotharii* as a province of the kingdom had been resuscitated in the reign of Zwentibold, and that something of its continuing distinction from the rest of the eastern kingdom was prolonged into the reign of Louis the Child. Gebhard's ducal title was based in part upon this sense of continuing distinction within the regnal structures of the kingdom, but this does not mean that it represented the establishment of a ducal office in that region. Indeed, we have seen that Gebhard's actions, as far as they can be reconstructed, do not conform to any extent with a position of real authority over the inhabitants of that region. Rather, it seems that the ducal title was employed by the court as part of a specific discourse of political response against the resurgent Babenberger in 903, and was intended as an advertisement to the wider political community of the continuing strength, solidarity and order of the kingdom. The St-Gall diploma cannot be seen therefore as evidence of the establishment of a Conradiner duchy in Lotharingia. But, this does not mean that their period of influence did not have significance for the development of power structures in that *regnum*. For all that they did not establish a ducal office through which Lotharingia could be controlled, the impact of the Conradiner was to create

¹⁰⁰ *DLouis the Child*, nr. 24.

the conditions in which one man could rise to a position of recognised leadership of the *regnum*; Reginar.

5.4: Conclusion: The Significance of the Conradiner in Lotharingia.

If the Conradiner duchy did not establish the institutional structures that Reginar could then take over as a going concern in 910-11, how do we explain his ability to arrive at a position of accepted political leadership at that time, and did the Conradiner have any impact at all on that development?

In one respect, Reginar's rise to political prominence and leadership was a return to a position that he had enjoyed briefly in the reign of Zwentibold. Regino, writing slightly later than the events he recorded, wrote that Reginar had been the king's most faithful of supporters but had nevertheless fallen into disgrace and had, as a result, lost the *honores* which formed the basis of his power, 'Eodem anno Zuendibolch Reginarium ducem sibi fidissimum et unicum consiliarium, nescio cuius instinctu, a se repulit et honoribus, hereditatibus, quas in suo regno habebat, interdictis eum cum extra regnum infra XIII dies secedere iubet'.¹⁰¹ In the years following the death of the king, however, Reginar was able to begin the process of reacquiring his lost *honores*: he was in control of Stavelot-Malmédy by 902, and proceeded over the next few years to regain both Echternach and St-Servatius at Maastricht.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 898, 145.

¹⁰² Stavelot: *DLouis the Child*, nr. 16(902); Echternach: nr. 53(907); St-Servatius: *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 100(a 919 diploma whose narration describes the earlier acquisition of the monastery by Reginar); Hlawitschka, *Lotharingien*, 192-3.

Despite the similarities with his earlier position under Zwentibold, Reginar's return to prominence in the early tenth century was different in one crucial respect. His position then had been essentially one of an outsider, whose receipt of royal patronage had been at the expense of the hitherto leading aristocratic figures of the Trier-Metz region, the kin-group led by Count Stephen, his Matfridinger allies, and the archbishop of Trier, from whose ranks he continued to be excluded. This distinction is best seen in the events of 898 when Reginar, following his own disgrace at the hands of the unpredictable Zwentibold, encouraged the western king Charles the Simple to invade Lotharingia.¹⁰³ Yet, for all their recent persecution at the hands of Zwentibold, not one Lotharingian magnate acknowledged Charles the Simple in 898. Their mutual opposition to Reginar is the most likely explanation for this moment of apparent harmony between the Lotharingian aristocracy and the king.¹⁰⁴

How then do we explain his apparent acceptance by these men in the reign of Louis the Child? We saw in Chapter Four that Zwentibold's unpredictable rapacity and his patronage of the outsider Reginar had the effect of politicising the aristocratic community of the Moselle valley and conditioning the nature of the dialogue which then took place between this collective and the backers of Louis the Child. This dialogue set the pattern for subsequent royal access to the region and it is significant that it is in Louis' reign that the royal chancery first began to refer to the region west of the Rhine as the 'regnum Lotharii'. The St-Gall diploma of 903 may have been

¹⁰³ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 898, 145-6.

¹⁰⁴ Offergeld, *Reges pueri*, 575.

produced in the context of political crisis but its use of 'regnum Lotharii' turned out to be unexceptional.

By the time of his reappearance in the reign of Louis the Child however, Reginar had evidently moved to a position of central importance within the ranks of the key aristocratic faction that the court relied upon in the *regnum Lotharii*. For all that the archbishop of Trier would later accuse Reginar of unlawfully acquiring St-Servatius at Maastricht, it is more likely that some accommodation must have been reached between these two key supporters of the Conradiner in Lotharingia.¹⁰⁵ Indeed, just as Ratbod emerges in the royal diplomas as the leading ecclesiastical representative of the *regnum Lotharii*, so Reginar appears as the dominant secular aristocrat.¹⁰⁶

Despite its paucity, the evidence does point towards the conclusion, when all things are considered, that the court maintained its control over the *regnum Lotharii* through a balance of power struck between Ratbod and Reginar. This balance of power represented in effect a fundamental transformation in the geopolitical patterns of the region which had long been dominated by the aristocracy of the Trier-Metz axis. Reginar's rise to a position of leadership alongside the archbishop of Trier meant that, for the first time, leadership of the *regnum Lotharii* passed to a representative of an aristocratic community whose basis of power, as we have seen,

¹⁰⁵ These accusations were made on the occasion of St-Servatius' restoration to Trier by Charles the Simple in 919, see *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 100, '...abbatia sancti Servatii...violentia Rageneri comitis et filii eius Giselberti a predicta Treverensi ecclesia iam olim esset iniuste ablata'; and nr. 103, '...sed...a potestate eiusdem sedis Ragnerus pridem comes eandem abbatiam violenter subtraxit et, reclamante dicto Rathbodo apud regem Zuindebaldum, illam reddere est compulsus sancto Petro. Verum Zuindebaldo perempto, iterum a Ragnero pervasa est ac post illum ab eius filio Gisleberto pari violentia...'.
¹⁰⁶ Ratbod: *DLouis the Child*, nrs. 2, 17, 49, 59; Reginar: nrs. 16, 50, 53, 57.

lay far from the traditional heartlands of the region. In effect, Reginar's rise to a position of power in Lotharingia resulted in the creation for the first time of a regional aristocratic community which was delineated by the contours of the *regnum Lotharii* itself.

Reginar's position, however, had only been made possible through the intervention of the Conradiner and their annihilation of effective Matfridinger power by 906. The brothers Gerard and Matfrid had been at the heart of the opposition to Zwentibold, and as is clear from their actions in the aftermath of the king's death, they sought to consolidate their regional dominance by securing an alliance with the Liudolfinger through a marriage to their nearest representative, Zwentibold's queen, Oda.¹⁰⁷ A strong Matfridinger-Liudolfinger alliance in Lotharingia however was not the intention of the Conradiner who, just as with their conflict with the Babenberger, sought to mobilise the royal court in their competition with their rivals. As we might have expected, this rivalry revolved around the possession of monastic *honores*, and just as Zwentibold had sought to cut the Matfridinger down to size by confiscating their holdings at St-Peter's at Metz and Oeren at Trier, so too did Gerard and Matfrid when, seeking to reestablish their position, they attacked the now Conradiner possessions of Oeren and St-Maximin.¹⁰⁸ Conradiner power proved too much for the Matfridinger, however, and having been pursued by the young Conrad to their fortified residence, the brothers now sought to make peace but were condemned as outlaws by an assembly held at Metz later in the year.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 900, 148.

¹⁰⁸ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 906, 150-1.

¹⁰⁹ Regino, *Chronicon*, a. 906, 151-2.

It was the defeat of the Matfridinger that allowed Reginar to rise to a position of political dominance in the *regnum Lotharii* for their defeat created a political vacuum at the highest levels of the aristocracy into which Reginar could step. The significance of the Conradiner involvement in Lotharingia, therefore, was not the establishment of a ducal office through which the *regnum* could be controlled, but rather the creation of the necessary conditions in which one man could achieve a position of effective predominance. It is in Reginar that we are permitted for the first time to see the emergence of a distinctly 'Lotharingian' aristocracy. Reginar was a representative of the western half of Lotharingia, the part that had fallen to Charles the Bald at Meerssen in 870. His rise to a position of leadership, however, and the ability to deliver the *regnum* into the hands of Charles the Simple in 911, could only have taken place with his access to the great monastic *honores* of the Moselle valley. Reginar managed to achieve this and in doing so emerged, in effect, as the first man to achieve a position of leadership in the newly emerging *regnum Lotharii*.

Chapter 6: Conclusion.

This thesis has argued that traditional approaches in understanding the place of Lotharingia in the political landscape of the late ninth and early tenth centuries have failed to account for the complex processes of evolution that characterised the realities of political identities and structures at that time. Building upon the foundations of recent historical scholarship, that has emphasised the skill and creativity with which Carolingian rulers manipulated the *regna* that together made up the *regnum Francorum*, the main thrust of the argument proposed here has proceeded on the basis that the original *regnum Lotharii*, the kingdom which was divided between Louis the German and Charles the Bald at Meerssen in 870, possessed no internal focus in the years following the death of the king that could serve to provide a sense of permanent distinction. With the death of the king, the one figure that did provide the pivot around which the aristocracy could revolve and at whose assemblies the magnates were gathered together as the political community, the kingdom was deprived of its cohesive force; its aristocracy pushing for division and for the most part adapting well to the changed experience of new royal lordship. In opposition to older historical approaches, this thesis employs a more nuanced perspective that rejects the position of Lotharingia as a static piece of the ninth-century political landscape and, in consequence, seeks to account for the emergence of the ‘Lotharingians’ by the early tenth century.

One consequence of this perspective was the necessity to account for the seemingly changeless and immutable nature of Lotharingia that is suggested by the survival of the terminology *regnum Lotharii* in source material from the 870s. In essence, Chapter Two argued that since Lothar II’s legacy was simply to bequeath a

particular terminology rather than a permanent institution, it is then possible to explain instances of survival in the source material as reflections of a court-based political agenda. The intensive use of the term in the royal charters of Charles the Bald, for example, reflected the desires of his court to create a particularly imperial imagery of his kingship but the use of which varied in what can be seen as a remarkably sensitive reaction to currents within the political landscape itself. By contrast, the court of Louis the German was not interested in such sophisticated royal imagery and its use of *regnum Lotharii* in eastern royal charters mirrored this attitude: only one charter carried the term.¹

Chapter Three suggested that such an elastic understanding, which permitted these varied uses of the term by kings, was encouraged by the non-existence after 870 of a politically distinct aristocracy which, had it existed, might have conditioned the nature in which the term *regnum Lotharii* was deployed by royal figures. In fact, this chapter argues that the eagerness demonstrated by the western Lotharingians in seeking to escape from the terms of the treaty of Ribemont in 882, is indicative of the success that both courts had in incorporating their gains of 870 into their respective *regna*. Ultimately, this was demonstrated in the real lack of enthusiasm shown by the aristocracies of the old middle kingdom when first Hugh, and then Rudolf I of Burgundy, sought to convince them to return to an independent political structure in the region; they both failed.

¹ For a different type of royal imagery at the court of Louis the German see, E. J. Goldberg, "More Devoted to the Equipment of Battle than the Splendor of Banquets": Frontier Kingship, Military Ritual, and Early Knighthood at the Court of Louis the German', *Viator*, xxx (1999), 41-78.

These conclusions, however, served to ask further questions and demanded in particular an explanation that accounted for the emergence of a distinct political community which, as we saw, decided its own destiny in 911, and which is then portrayed in Flodoard's *Annales* as a fully-fledged and active political force by the 920s. Chapter Four began our enquiry of this development and argued that the first crucial step occurred in the reign of King Zwentibold. Connecting this chapter with the theme of elastic terminology covered earlier in the thesis, it showed that Arnulf's use of the *regnum Lotharii* as a suitable royal tradition with which to endow his son was determined by wider political currents, and encouraged, partly, by the increasingly imperial style of his own kingship. More specifically, however, it showed how, once Zwentibold was established, the first signs of political distinctiveness emerged within the ranks of the aristocracy. That distinctiveness, however, was not the product of durable political structures created by Zwentibold, whose reign in fact collapsed amid rebellion and a return to east-Frankish lordship under Louis the Child. Through unpredictable and rapacious assaults against the members of the eastern Lotharingian aristocracy inhabiting the Moselle valley, and the parallel promotion of the outsider Reginar, Zwentibold created a situation in which this eastern community was politicised by being forced to safeguard its own future welfare by negotiating its return to the more stable regnal setup promised by Louis the Child. It was in spite of himself, therefore, that Zwentibold put in place the initial conditions in the emergence in Lotharingia of a distinct political community.

The problems faced by Zwentibold during his reign serve to confirm the picture we have uncovered already of a Lotharingian region inhabited by a western aristocracy, represented in this case by Reginar, whose members had been incorporated into the

kingdom of Charles the Bald, and an eastern community focused in the Moselle valley that had fallen at Meerssen to Louis the German. It was probably with Reginar in mind that Regino complained of the humble men who dominated the business of government in Zwentibold's kingdom, but his strangeness and unacceptability to those who had suffered demotion because of his rise to favour was actually based on his being an outsider. In the emergence of a truly regnal Lotharingian aristocracy, therefore, we have to offer an explanation of just how these two regional communities managed to come together and permit one member, the formerly unacceptable outsider Reginar, to achieve a position of leadership in 911.

This was the question posed in Chapter Five. There, after reminding ourselves that Reginar was indeed a representative of a distinctly western constituency, it was argued that his ability to begin a rise to political leadership was intimately associated with the arrival in Lotharingia of the powerful Conradiner family. In this chapter, however, new conclusions were offered on the nature of the impact provided in Lotharingia by these powerful members of the *Reichsaristokratie*. That chapter demonstrated that their significance did not lie in the supposed establishment of a duchy, as a new means of rule in Lotharingia, and into which Reginar could later step. Rather, the title *dux regni quod a multis Hlotharii dicitur*, which we saw in Gebhard's possession in 903, was in fact another example of the flexible opportunities that the term *regnum Lotharii* offered at particular moments of stress in the political landscape. In this case it was being used to buttress an image of royal and regnal strength in the midst of the very serious challenges posed by the Babenberger feud. But if the duchy therefore remains something of a red herring, what did serve to bring these two aristocratic communities together under a common leadership? Chapter Five argued

that it was simply through sheer power. The overwhelming force that the Conradiner could mobilise against the Matfridinger, their main rivals in Lotharingia, sidelined Counts Gerard and Matfrid as a political force and allowed Reginar to firmly establish himself as a political operator in the Moselle valley. In this way one man now possessed real political clout in both regions of the old middle kingdom, and it was from this position of strength that Reginar could emerge as the leading personality of the region in the wake of Gebhard's death in 910. This thesis, therefore, has offered an alternative understanding of Lotharingia in the late ninth and early tenth centuries. Having eschewed those traditional perspectives that understand the region to be an immutable structure in the political landscape, it has provided a more subtle perspective by uncovering the nature of Lotharingia's emergence as an active political unit by 911.

There is much that still needs to be said. Lotharingia still lacks its history of the ninth and tenth centuries but this thesis has begun that task by offering a more realistic starting position for any future investigation. At a more specific level, however, much more research is needed into those changes, which as I intimated in Chapter Four, seem to have been altering the base material with which Zwentibold had to construct a kingdom at the end of the ninth century. His experience, of course, may simply have been an exception but these apparent structural changes, if they really are there, may provide some further understanding of the more general theme of royal decline in the tenth century.

Lotharingian political development, moreover, did not cease with 911, and the tenth century offers some fruitful avenues of exploration. Inevitably, we are drawn again towards a political landscape dominated by the principalities and Lotharingia,

situated at the heart of the Frankish *regnum* and thus sandwiched between the western landscape of the *Principautés* and the eastern *Herzogtümer*, offers an exciting opportunity to understand the emergence of these regional structure of aristocratic power and authority which accounts for both historical traditions. A fruitful starting point would likely be Reginar's son Giselbert whom we have already met in the introduction as the *princeps* elected by the Lotharingians in the wake of Charles the Simple's initial difficulties with his western *optimates* in 920. Indeed, as is suggested by the title *princeps*, which was recorded by the contemporary annalist Flodoard of Reims, the perception and perhaps substance of Giselbert's power had moved on from the position that his father had possessed only a few years previous. What is meant by such a term, and does it indicate a move towards exercising legitimate authority *sui generis*, rather than political clout exercised by a favoured royal supporter?

Tim Reuter considered Giselbert to have been, 'a quasi-regal duke', whose power and position was demonstrated in his dispute with Charles the Simple over the appointment to the see of Liège in 920 when, according to Flodoard, Giselbert continued to support Bishop Hilduin, the candidate to whom he had provided his agreement, against the king's preference for Richar, the abbot of Prüm.² This does look like a clash between *rex* and *princeps* over defined rights of lordship and spheres of authority; indeed, this was how some later commentators understood the event. For Folcuin at Lobbes, for example, the blame lay squarely with Giselbert, 'Nam pars una Hilduinum, eiusdem ecclesiae clericum, sibi poscebat episcopum, favente sibi ad hoc

² *Annales*, a. 920, 3-4; Reuter, *Germany*, 131-133. For an extended discussion of the Liège dispute see H. Zimmermann, 'Der Streit um das Lütticher Bistum vom Jahre 920/92: Geschichte, Quellen und kirchenrechtshistorische Bedeutung', *MIÖG*, lxxv (1957), 15-52.

Giselberto Lothariensi duce, qui floccipendens regiam maiestatem, regni sibi usurpaverat summam'.³

Two brief points can be made. As much as the Liège affair may look like the clash of two competing authorities, Giselbert's actions in 920 fell into an initial period of his career following the death of his father in which his own political fortunes had suffered. Giselbert had not succeeded to the full range of his father's abbatial *honores*, while other members of the kin challenged his control of the family's landed possessions.⁴ A second observation is that Liège lay in the Hesbaye.⁵ This was one of the *pagi* in which Giselbert had managed to succeed to his father's comital position, and the imminent imposition of a new bishop evidently carried political significance for the local count. The new bishop was Richar who, as we have seen, was a member of the Matfridinger family; his arrival in Giselbert's home regions may not have been a welcome prospect for an already embattled count. From this perspective, the events at Liège are understandable as an example of the type of frantic creativity that accompanied a loss in political fortune, and which Airlie saw in Boso's transformation from *dux* to *rex*, rather than as a declaration of a new kind of princely power.⁶ The dispute over the destination of the see of Liège was soon resolved in favour of the king and Giselbert's future looked bleak. He survived this period, however, and indeed prospered. In 925, the Saxon king Henry I managed to fully establish his control over Lotharingia.⁷ Within a matter of a few years, Giselbert was married to a Saxon princess and entitled *dux* by the royal chancery. This transformation in his political

³ Folcuin, *Gesta*, c. 19, 63.

⁴ *Cat. abb. Ept*, 738-742; *Series Abbatum Stabulensium*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, *MGH SS*, XIII (Hanover, 1881), 292-4; *DCharles the Simple*, nr. 100 and 103; *Annales*, a. 924, 21.

⁵ Nonn, *Pagus und Comitatus*, 142-3.

⁶ Airlie, 'Nearly Men', 30.

⁷ *Annales*, a. 925, 33.

fortunes had only accompanied his move from a Carolingian kingdom to a nascent Ottonian one. Gisibert's later career, therefore, offers an exciting chance to understand the emergence of a new type of political landscape. That, however, is a different story, but regardless, Gisibert's political horizons remained focused upon the *regnum Lotharii*, a political unit that had emerged only in a Carolingian late ninth century.

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